621 643 157 [564] a ruler.' It is relevant to add that cuttings of this tree strike easily in the soil and climate of Nyakyusa country. When a chief dies he is buried beside his trees, and gradually a thicket—a sacred grove—forms round them.

The young men spend much time feasting and dancing. Formerly not only did they raid cattle for food from neighbouring chiefdoms, but they also took cattle, milk, and bananas from their fathers' villages. And they still do the latter, for they say: 'We are now the owners of the country.' The milk and bananas are often sent by the old chief, but 'if the chief is stingy, they teach him a lesson by going and *taking* bananas, saying: "We are important people."' Great emphasis is laid on this right of the young men to take food: one group, the mates of the first heir of a senior chief, boasted to us: 'We came out with grandeur, we ate many men's cattle.'

342 621 After a month or two the members of each new village move off to build on a site of their own, and the wives of those who are married join them. Wives do not come to the first temporary shelters. The senior of the new villages remains on the site of the temporary shelters where fire was made, the ritual trees planted, and the hearth-stones of the senior headman established with magic. Gradually each member builds himself a permanent hut.

621 561 The old men move aside to make room for their sons. If land is short they may move on to the site on which a boys' village formerly was, or there may be other land available. Whatever the position, adequate land must be provided for the young men's villages. And, we were told, 'We old men are glad to move, we are glad our sons are so many and we leave the land to them.' Or again: 'The old men move because new fire has come; the young men have made themselves into new people, hence they cannot build on their old sites but on new ones. Perhaps the old men will succeed them, for they may build in the boys' village where their sons were, or if there is space they go elsewhere. But the old men rejoice greatly, for their sons have "come out".' Nevertheless there are sometimes disputes between villages of different generations regarding a particular site (*vide* Document, p. 188).

683 582 585 A few months after the 'coming out' each of the two young chiefs marries two wives. A young chief may be married already; but the two whom he now takes rank as his great wives (*abeke*

264 cultivate her mind by conversation, or to eat regularly in company.
462 In more formal hospitality there is the same difference; a
574 woman never invites her friends to drink beer with her, or to a
'dinner party', as her husband must do if he is to have prestige
with his neighbours. Women only share the ritual feasts at initiation
and marriage, and at death.

585 There are local variations in Nyakyusa rituals, notably between
the Kukwe and Nyakyusa proper. But everywhere there is an
● 764 obligation to provide feasts at the funerals and marriages of dependants.
574 When his wife or unmarried child dies, a man must
kill cattle for his relatives and neighbours to feast at the burial,[1]
while an heir provides a feast for his relatives, and the neighbours
of the 'father' from whom he has inherited. At these feasts equal
portions of meat are allotted to relatives and neighbours—or
were so allotted until the rights of neighbours to meat at funerals
were formally limited (*vide infra*, p. 93). An heir must also brew
beer, or kill a bull, to feast the deceased's neighbours when he
begins to cohabit with his widow, or moves the property from
his village. At the initiation and marriage of a girl there is a series
of feasts (five in Selya), the food for which is provided partly by
the groom's family and partly by the bride's; and if, as is usual,
the bride is still a virgin or has been deflowered by the groom himself,
he must provide a bull in thanks for her virginity (*engambako
jabusungu*), which is killed to feast the neighbours and relatives
of her parents. The carcass is divided into three portions,
one for the immediate neighbours of her father (men), one for
'those relatives with whom the father is on good terms and exchanges
cattle', and one for the 'mothers' of the bride. Women as
well as men eat meat and other fine food at all the marriage and
funeral feasts.

574 The third occasion on which a feast for the village neighbours
is thought to be essential is when a man or woman has offended
576 his (or her) neighbours, or the neighbours of a 'father'. Thus a
woman who has shirked her duty of advising on the division of her
brother's inheritance, and is disapproved of by her neighbours on
this account, begs pardon of them over a brewing of beer (*vide
infra*, pp. 107, 236); a son, having insulted his father's neighbours

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[1] For the circumstances under which other relatives must provide cattle for funeral feasts see Godfrey Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial', *Bantu Studies*, Vol. XIII (1939), p. 18.

574 by insulting his father, begs pardon of them by bringing a bull
576 which his father may eat with them; or a daughter-in-law, having
inadvertently caught sight of her father-in-law, brings beer for
him to drink with his neighbours.

574 At all feasts food is allotted in terms of kinship and village
affiliation, and this tends to enhance the solidarity of kin groups
264 and villages. For example, funeral meat is first divided between
● 764 relatives and non-relatives, and that allocated to non-relatives is
subdivided by villages, each village headman present being given
a share to divide between his people, men and women. When a
relative of the chief has died, and the whole country has come to
mourn, the chief allots a cow to each of his senior headmen, who
then divide the carcasses between the villages in their respective
halves of the chiefdom. The meat at a 'coming out' ceremony,
and at the great feasts which were held after battle, was divided
in the same way, and we saw a division of this kind when a
senior headman who had been in exile was welcomed home
(cf. pp. 273-4). Thus the right to share in a feast depends either
on kinship with the provider, or on membership of a village.

574 The Christians' code of hospitality differs somewhat from that
184 of the pagans: the latter stress feeding neighbours, whether it be in
the daily eating together, or at informal beer and dinner parties,
or at ceremonies, while the Christians stress feeding strangers,
quoting the text 'I was a stranger and ye took me in'[7] and the
parable of the Good Samaritan.[8] The pagans jibe at the Christians
for being inhospitable because (as the Christians themselves
admit) they entertain their neighbours less than pagans do; the
Christians point to their wider obligations, and the fact that they
do feed and house visitors from a distance, especially fellow
Christians gathering for Church festivals. The Christians are
very conscious also of the difficulties of hospitality in a monogamous household, for a wife must not only do all the cooking
for visitors (and many Nyakyusa dishes require considerable
labour to prepare), but she must also help to grow the food. The
pagan who can afford to entertain much has several wives who
share the work between them, whereas a Christian, no matter
how rich, cannot have more than one wife and remain a member
of his Church—unless it be one of the two small independent

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[7] Matthew xxv. 35.

[8] Luke x. 29.

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

574 184 African churches which countenance polygyny. The difficulty is partially overcome in some well-to-do Christian families by hiring labour to work in their fields and to fetch water and wood, and by offering visitors coffee or tea, which are easily prepared, [182] in place of home-brewed beer; nevertheless the conflict between the value of hospitality (to which pagan and Christian alike subscribe, though they define it rather differently) and the value of monogamy, is often acute.

621 The mutual obligations of neighbours are not confined to feeding one another, for neighbours share with relatives the obligation of giving sympathy and assistance at the various crises in Nyakyusa life; the concept of *ukumanyana* includes keeping on good terms with people by being sympathetic and obliging.

•764 621 All the members of a village (except young children) are obliged to attend every burial of an adolescent or adult in that village; they go to mourn the death of a neighbour or condole with one who is burying a 'son', for if a man dies while his father (or father's full brother, or his own senior brother) is yet alive, he is often buried in his 'father's' homestead.[1] Where a youth or man is buried by his 'father', his fellow villagers must attend the funeral also, but boys and young men need not go to a funeral in their fathers' village unless it is a village-mate of their own who is being buried.

[759] Funerals are occasions for feasting and dancing, so the obligation 'to mourn one another' (*ukulilana*) does not press hardly, and the Nyakyusa feeling is that no one would fail to come unless he were a witch, and fearful lest his victim rise from the grave and denounce him. 'If a man does not go to his neighbour's burial then at once people say: "It was you who bewitched him. Why else do you not come to bury him?"' Failure to come is certain evidence that the truant is 'a harsh man who does not keep on good terms with people (*ukali, atikumanyana bandu*)'.

764 One neighbour, 'he who went about most with the dead man', is appointed by the headman of the village to help the relatives dig the grave, and village neighbours must also bring small gifts of food and firewood for the entertainment of the many guests.

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[1] A married man whose 'fathers' are dead, or do not choose to exercise their right to bury him, is buried at his own home; and a woman who has borne a child is buried at her husband's home.

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

Food (other than meat) is provided on the day of the burial by the women of the home at which the burial takes place, on the succeeding day by visiting relatives, and on the third day by village neighbours. Women neighbours, like women relatives, often bring gifts of bark-cloth belts (*amabike*) with which to bind up the bellies of their bereaved friends, who are all atremble and full of fear, and so support them. These belts symbolize the sympathy of friends in the fearful grief of the mourners. 'If a woman wears many belts at a burial that means that she has many friends; her passionate grief is comforted by their friendship.'[1] And neighbours, like relatives and close friends from other chiefdoms, may bring cloths which are used to wrap the corpse and bind up the bellies of the chief mourners. But these gifts of food, firewood, belts, and cloth are the limit of a neighbour's obligations; very rarely does a neighbour bring a bull to kill for the funeral feast, whereas close kinsmen and affines are obliged to provide a bull or cow for this purpose if they have one. And neighbours take virtually no share in the elaborate ritual which follows for cleansing relatives from the contagion of death, driving the thought of the deceased out of their minds, and bringing back his spirit to bless the home. Their only part is to bring small gifts of millet from which to brew the beer drunk at the close of this ritual.

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At an ordinary birth there is very little ceremony and the village as a group is not concerned, though close friends will help the mother during her confinement, fetching wood and water for her, and bringing occasional gifts of cooked food; but twin births are regarded as fearful and dangerous, and an elaborate ritual is performed to cleanse relatives from the contagion which, if left untreated, is believed to lead to serious swelling of the arms, legs, and stomachs, accompanied by diarrhoea. Relatives are treated with many medicines, while village neighbours are sprinkled with one only, but their cattle, especially the cattle herded with those of the man who has begotten twins, are thought to be in danger. At one twin ritual we watched there was some discussion whether all the cattle of the age-village should be treated, or only those of the herd-group to which the father of the twins belonged. Finally it was decided that on previous occasions all the cattle of the village had been treated, and a message was sent

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[1] cf. Godfrey Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial', *Bantu Studies*, Vol. XIII (1939), p. 10.

582. Marriage with the daughter of a father's age-mate is also favoured, though she is called 'a village-sister' (*umulumbu pa kipanga*), and such a marriage means that a girl has to avoid a father-in-law in her own father's village.

837 835 Adultery with the wife of a village neighbour is regarded as a heinous offence, much worse than ordinary adultery, and so also is the seduction of the wife of one's father, or of one of his village neighbours, even though a father's wives are eventually inherited by his son. 'It is bad,' Mwaisumo said, 'because they are friends of one's own mother.' That is to say, there is a direct extension of the incest taboo so long as the father is alive. A son who has committed adultery with his own father's wives is afraid to attend his
[764] father's funeral lest he fall dead.[1]

584 Since marriage between 'brothers and sisters of the village' is approved, courtship goes on between the youths of a boys' village and the girls of their fathers' village, with this limitation, that brothers and sisters, or cousins—the descendants of a common grandfather or great-grandfather—must not be present at a flirtation. Boys from the same age-village go about together, and they commonly flirt with any group of girls they meet, whether from their fathers' village or not. It is then that the incest taboos are learnt. If one of the boys is known to be related to one of the girls his companions send him away saying: 'Don't you see your sister is here? You cannot come.'

Formerly, we were told, girls of the same village lived together (until they were married) in a girls' house (*isaka*), where they were visited secretly by lovers, who had external relations with them. Such girls' houses no longer exist among the Nyakyusa, each daughter living in her father's homestead until she is married, and sleeping with her own mother, or with a step-mother when her father visits her mother, or with the other children in a separate division of the long house, if her mother is the only wife. Only when she is keeping an older companion company at the initiation ritual does she sleep with the other girls of the village in a hut provided by the 'bride's' father.[2] But permanent girls' houses still exist in Ngonde. There each family woman who was once caught by her husband when she came home during the night with human flesh and began to cook it. 754 Domestic fires are thought to become infected, because the witches are in the habit of roasting human flesh over them; sometimes, it is said, they use the victim's hearth, sometimes their own. Fear of such contamination by witches was one of the reasons for clearing out the ashes and lighting new fires, at the new year, and when an epidemic or other misfortune threatened (*vide infra*, p. 121).

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[1] Occasionally an elderly man gives his son leave to sleep with his wives in secret, while he (the father) is still alive; then an elaborate ritual is performed on the father's death.

[2] This hut is referred to as *isaka* also, but only during the initiation; it is to be distinguished from a hut regularly reserved for girls.

The human flesh eaten is always spoken of as that of living 754 victims, never that of corpses, as in some other areas, though the living die of the witches' attacks. Further, it is believed that 764 witches kill people in order to feast on the beef of cows killed at the funeral. 'To what', said old Mwandesi, 'are the many deaths among us due? They are due to meat!' So strong was this feeling that at the end of 1935 the chiefs and village headmen of a number of chiefdoms stretching from Mwaya on the Lake to Mwakeleli in the hills (but not including the western Nyakyusa chiefdoms), decided to abandon the custom of killing many cows at a funeral. 'There is', they said, 'too much death in the country, the witches are killing people so as to have meat. Let us go back to the old custom and kill few cows. . . . If anyone complains that at a burial he was given no meat to eat, he is a witch, and we will turn him out of the country.' Formerly, we were told, two was the maximum number of cows killed at a funeral, and they were not killed until the witch had been discovered by the ordeal.

The theme of the witches' lust for meat is elaborated in various 757 ways. It is said, for example, that the witches never use their own teeth when they go to eat a victim but like to borrow the victim's teeth, and that if startled, they may go off with the teeth altogether. One whose teeth have been used by the witches and then put back, knows about it in the morning because he finds his teeth rather loose. Most fearful of all, those who dream of being chased by witches hear them boasting to one another: 'We will *all eat!*'

It is meat and milk, the most prized foods of the Nyakyusa, which are commonly spoken of as exciting the greed of witches. Millet (from which beer is brewed), beans, and rice, are said to be subject to occasional attacks by witches, e.g. millet (or beans, or rice) ripening in the fields, or drying in the sun, is thought to get

account with other villages of the same chiefdom, and forming a 621
detachment under its own headman in the army of the chiefdom. 701
Before an attack each village was harangued by its headman who urged: 'Keep all your spears together. If you abandon your fellow you have a case against you! All return together!' And, as we have seen, it was held that men of the same village should stand shoulder to shoulder in war and in a hunt, that they might be brave.

Cattle raids and adultery cases were the prime causes of war— 721
fighting commonly began with a dispute over a woman, or lust
for meat. Less frequently it was a quarrel between two villages 764●
or two chiefdoms over a boundary that led to war. Hostilities often flared up at a funeral when men danced the war dance with spears (*ukukina*). The Nyakyusa interpret this dancing at funerals as an expression of anger at death, a protest against death.[1] 'Formerly we protested against death, we said: "Our fellow has died, *aje!* Let us put our friend to rest!" We protested with war, we protested with spears, and people died.' Or as another informant put it, 'The war dance is a way of weeping. We dance the war dance because war is in our hearts.' But the anger at death very easily merged into anger against human enemies. 'If the men of two chiefdoms or two villages were present at a burial they would quarrel and fight. The fight began when one hurled his spear into the ground and thus spewed the earth over someone else. Perhaps there would be only a few dancing at first and many sitting down, but when a neighbouring chief was seen approaching with his men, and the sound of the trumpets was heard, those already there would say: "If we sit still they will say there are no men but only women at this funeral. Let us dance too." So they would all get up and dance, and if the others did anything there would be war. Now the custom of the war dance is dying out. We chiefs control it, and when another chief comes to a funeral we tell all our men to sit down while he and his men dance at the grave, because if we do not, the war of old times is liable to break out.'

In fact peace has been effectively enforced among the Nyak- 721
yusa.[2] We neither saw nor heard of a fight in the three years we 672
were there. Thus mutual dependence in war is no longer a strong 673
sanction for village unity. The joint responsibility for certain 177

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[1] cf. Godfrey Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial', *Bantu Studies*, Vol. XIII (1939.)

[2] A contrast to Pondoland or Zululand.

26. THE AUTOPSY

Note.—It was not easy to see an autopsy among the Nyakyusa— one never knew beforehand when such an operation would be held, 763 and since imputations of witchcraft and sorcery are punishable 123 offences, people were often reluctant to perform it when Europeans were there. There was only one European doctor in Rungwe district, and he was a very busy man with a hospital and dispensaries to supervise. All the operations witnessed were performed over twenty-five miles from his headquarters and far off any road. Therefore, we were never able to arrange for a qualified practitioner to be present at a Nyakyusa autopsy, as we wished. The following layman's accounts, though lacking any anatomical detail, explain the method of procedure, and the Nyakyusa reactions.

Autopsy (ukupendula) witnessed by G. W., 18/3/37.

Funeral of the wife of Mwampiki: Mwampiki himself is dead, but 764 his homestead and wives have been inherited by a younger half-brother, Mwinalwa. The dead woman is a wife of another half-brother, Mwalemba. Kabuja, the village headman, called me to the funeral.

The body was carried apart, away from the crowd of women, behind a clump of bananas, by five or six women, who then washed it and put on a bark-cloth and a cloth (folded tight like a bark-cloth) round the loins. Then the young man, Mwaijumba, and I were allowed to come and watch.

The doctor, a woman, had five little knives of bamboo, made for 763 the autopsy, and thrown away with the rubbish afterwards. Before 764 she began to cut the stomach open another woman, a wife of Mwampiki (wearing mourning belts and smeared with mud) came and crouched down with her face close to that of the corpse, and a cloth covering her head and that of the corpse. 'That is the Nyakyusa custom', the young man explained. 'She is helping the doctor. The fearsomeness (ubutiyo) of a human body is less when someone else is at the head.'

Then the doctor, using the bamboo knives, made an incision across 763 the stomach, and cut through the flesh until the intestines showed. The stomach was swollen up. Mwasomba, a classificatory brother of Mwampiki, had joined us by this time. He was fetched by Mwaijumba to come and examine the corpse. He urged the doctor to make the incision wider and she did so. Mwasomba also insisted on Mwai-

128 184 771 interpretations scarcely differ. Thus the commonly accepted idea that ritual forms are more stable than the interpretation of symbolism¹ does not hold for the Nyakyusa.

128 764 The account of the ritual cycle begins with an analysis of funeral rites, for of all the family rituals they involve the greatest emotional tension and are the most elaborate, as well as being performed far more frequently than any others. Moreover, in them are adumbrated symbolic patterns which recur again and again throughout the cycle; in them is apparent that preoccupation with fertility characteristic of the cycle—they are a rite of creation as well as a farewell to the dead—and in them lies the key to an understanding of the conception of the *abafyale*, 'those who have risen from the dead', that is, the shades.

128 771 The principal participants in the rituals are immediate kin—parents and children, siblings, grandparents and grandchildren—but the circle included varies with the particular ritual concerned and more distant relatives and neighbours are involved in varying degrees. In order to bring out these differences and avoid repetition, the detailed discussion of who takes part is deferred until after all the rituals have been described.

[illegible] Should any Nyakyusa, reading this, feel that matters have been revealed which should remain secret, I would remind them that the interpretation of traditional ritual reveals a profound similarity in the phantasies of the Nyakyusa and those of other races; and such understanding of the dark places of men's minds as the *abanyago* possess may swell that body of knowledge which is the heritage of men of all races and cultures.

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[1] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *Structure and Function in Primitive Society* (1952), pp. 155-7; A. N. Whitehead, *Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect* (1928), p. 70.

CHAPTER II

BURIAL RITES*

(*a*) *The form of burial*

WHENEVER a death takes place, whether of man, woman, or child, 764 a series of funeral rites lasting a month or more begins. The first of the series is the burial (*ifwa*) which, in the case of most adults, lasts three or four days, though for a rich man it may continue for a week, and for a child it is over in a day. For the sake of convenience the account of burial is given mainly in reference to the burials of men; those of women are very similar and occasional references are made to them; but the constant qualifications of statement that would be necessary to give a complete description of both would be wearisome and are unnecessary for our purpose.

As soon as death occurs the women who are present begin wail- 763 ing and messages are sent to the chief, the village headman, and 764 the dead man's kinsmen and affines, to announce the fact and bid them to the burial. The first message is sent to the father, or to a senior brother, if one is still alive, or failing them to the heir of the dead man, and he it is who sends out the other messages. If the father or a senior brother is alive the burial may take place at his homestead, the body being carried there at once; otherwise the dead man is buried at his own home: the choice rests with his father. A married woman is buried at her husband's home if she has borne children, otherwise at her father's; an elderly widow is buried by her son.

Messages must be sent to all the fathers-in-law and all the sons- 602 in-law both of the dead man and of the senior kinsman who 763 buries him, to all the dead man's full and half-brothers, to the husbands of his sisters, to any classificatory brothers with whom he exchanged cows, to his mother's father or brother, to the full and half-brothers of his father, and to his sons. If any one of these

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* This description is an amended version of that published by Godfrey Wilson in 'Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial', *Bantu Studies*, 1939. The theoretical analysis differs somewhat from that offered in the paper, for the ritual element appears to me to be dominant at the burial as well as in the later 'farewell to the dead'. Between us we attended thirty funerals, in whole or in part.

602 763 is forgotten he will be angry: 'It happens sometimes that a kinsman comes in later, after the man is buried, and is very angry because no message was sent to him; he comes in a passion, and perhaps he beats his brother [the one who should have sent him a message]. Then the others catch hold of him and say: "Why do you not come soberly and greet us decently with the appropriate words? Come now, why?" And if he does not stop they beat him.'

602 764 These kinsmen and affines, with their wives and children, are under obligation to come to the burial, unless they are sick. Young children under the age of 10 or 11 are not obliged to come, though they often do, but older children must do so. One reason for the continuance of the burial ceremonies for three or four days is that this gives time for relatives from a distance to receive the messages and come. Deliberately to refuse to send a message or, on the [578] other side, to refuse to come to a burial for no good reason, is a symbolic breaking of the bond of kinship and no one ever does either, unless there is a serious quarrel and all economic and social relations are being broken off between the two families concerned.

621 764 577 The village neighbours also are obliged to come to every burial in the village. They normally wish to do so, but, even if they do not, they still come for shame or for fear of being accused of witchcraft if they stay away. Where there is friendship the neighbours come in grief and sympathy and quarrels are softened by the fact of death, but, if the memory of enmity still persists, then the last sanctions are shame and fear: 'Some people mourn more than others.' 'The men who knew him say: "Let us go and mourn him."' 'Those who did not know him intimately mourn because each thinks: "He has died, my neighbour, and so will it be with me one day."' 'If I have quarrelled with my neighbour and he dies, I go to his burial for I say to myself: "It is true that while he lived we quarrelled, but now he is dead and we shall never meet again. I too will go to his burial and mourn him."' 'If a village neighbour does not come to a burial we say he is unkindly and unsociable.' 'And if a man does not go to his neighbour's burial then at once people say: "It was you who bewitched him. Why else do you not come to bury him?"' Several of the accusations of witchcraft recorded had been occasioned by a man's absence from a village neighbour's funeral. For it is believed that witches are chary of going to the burials of their victims lest the dead should rise and denounce them.

663 764 A chief normally goes to all burials in his own country, except

those of very young children. 'He goes because it is his subject 643 764
who has died: he is like the senior kinsman of the whole country, he rules all.' 'If a chief omits to go to a burial people say nothing, they know that he is always going to burials and they think that perhaps he has some urgent business. But if he constantly misses burials then people say that he has no affection for his people, that he does not come to bury them as is fit; and if a chief hears them saying this then he is ashamed.' Sometimes a chief who is busy will send a son to represent him. And he sends the drums to beat the lament. 'The drum *is* the chief . . . they cannot beat the drum before the chief has spoken.'

Besides the chief, the villagers, the relatives, and the drummers, 764
there come also personal friends of the dead man from other vil- 572
lages and chiefdoms. And beyond all these there often come others 571
who are attracted not so much by grief and sympathy, nor even by the obligation to express these feelings, but rather by the dancing, the crowds and the possibility of getting some meat to eat. Not all those who come stay the whole three or four days, while the relatives who live at a distance often do not arrive until the second or third day.

The Nyakyusa believe that in order to protect the living and 763
avenge the dead it is most important to discover the cause of death. To do this they summon a doctor to perform an autopsy,[1] an operation fearful and repugnant, but felt to be necessary. The symptoms are interpreted in terms of witchcraft or sorcery, or other supposed causes of disease.

On the first, or early on the second, day after death, the burial 764
takes place. The grave is dug in the swept and beaten earth that immediately surrounds the huts. The first spit of earth is always turned by the eldest son of the one who has died. At one burial we saw the young eldest son of a dead man being helped to do this. He was too small to manage a hoe by himself so he caught the handle near the blade while an older relative held it behind to steady it for him. The digging after the first spit is done by a skilled grave-digger, who may be a kinsman or not, with the help of others. The grave is ten or more feet deep with a cave at the bottom to one side. Some graves are oblong, some round or oval,

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[1] This is certainly traditional, cf. D. Kerr-Cross, 'Crater Lakes North of Lake Nyasa', *The Geographical Journal*, V (1895), p. 119. The custom is also reported for the Nyamwanga. For a description of the autopsy, cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 247-50.

● 76a according to lineage custom. In the round and oval graves the body is placed in the cave in a sitting position; in the oblong graves lying at full length on one arm; but in both the dead man is set to face the direction from which he and his people have [173] traditionally come. The bulk of the Nyakyusa say that they came from the east, eight or ten generations ago, down the Livingstone Mountains into their present country; and it is to the east that they face in death. Those in the north of the district, whose local name is Kukwe, face in death towards their most recent centre of dispersion near Rungwe Mountain, although they have traditions going farther back to a migration from the Livingstone Mountains through the present Sangu country.

Digging a grave is traditionally a dangerous activity, but nowadays it is no longer so much feared as it used to be. Formerly only mature men helped to dig a grave and they were given a whole leg of the burial meat to eat by themselves. Nowadays young men—often Christians—do it.

Before the burial the body is carried in procession round the homestead. The chief mourners surround it wailing, and the dead man's cattle are driven in front. 'We do this to honour the dead man.' Then one of the cattle of the lineage is taken 'to look into the grave'. Two or three people get down into the grave to receive and bury the body. In the case of a man, his chief wife, his sister, and a male kinsman or village neighbour usually bury him. These three line the cave with mats and cloths which are passed down to them; then the body, previously washed and shaved[1] and now wrapped in cloths, is handed down, and they put it in position in the cave together with a few personal possessions such as a pipe, an eating-pot, a little calabash of ointment, and one of beer; nowadays also a looking-glass and perhaps a pencil and a cup. 'He goes with them to the place of the shades.' A woman is given bark-cloth belts and rouge, and a winnowing basket in place of the pipe and pot. They take off the strings of such utensils as are normally hung up. 'If the strings are left on the utensils will still be hanging up and he will be looking for them.' More cloths and mats are then put in with the body, and the cave is closed either with a stiff mat or with the door of the dead man's house, in accordance with local custom. Often there are hot disputes be-

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[184] [1] The Kukwe wash the body just before death, the Nyakyusa and Penja after. The Kukwe fear lest their children should die of 'water in the stomach' if they wash a corpse.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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tween the kinsmen about the amount of property to be destroyed. 764
Once we saw the sons of a dead man tugging at two fine mats which his sister was folding into the cave. She wished to put them in but the sons opposed her, saying: 'Why should we spend all the mats? We have buried him, he is dead.'

It is held to be most important that earth should not touch the corpse's face, but once the cave has been closed the chief mourners each push a few handfuls of earth into the grave, the rest of the earth is filled in, and the dancers stamp it hard. Soon no sign of the grave remains.

(i) *The terror of death*

Death to the Nyakyusa is a fearful thing. They believe that the 761
spirit (*umsyuka*) of a dead man survives underground (*pasi*) in the 776
place of the shades (*abasyuka*) and that it can and does visit sur- 765
viving relatives in dreams and materially affect their destinies. The shades of the dead are one of the final causes with which their religion deals. But contact with them is feared and the function of the ritual at the funeral is 'to drive the shade away'. This ritual begins during the burial (*[illegible]*) and continues in a series of rites which last for a month or longer. At the burial itself people's attention is mainly concerned with the death as an emotional event, with the fact that a father, a mother, a kinsman or a neighbour has died; but into the emotional quality of death their religious beliefs enter. With the shades they desire no close contact, for the most usual dreams of the dead are those in which they reproach a man for some sin, or foretell his death; their commonest activity is believed to be the sending of madness and misfortune upon sinful men. Nor is it desirable to join the shades oneself. The place of the shades is a vague and shadowy land where no certain happiness is traditionally believed to be. 'No one', said an old man, 'has ever been there and come back to tell us about it. When the dead come to us in dreams they do not show us where they live nor tell us about their life. We do not know what we shall find there. But we do not think that we shall have happiness, or friendly intercourse.' 'He has died and we shall never meet again,' said another man of his dead neighbour. Some old men, however, have definite theories about the place of the spirits, and all agree that wealth is important there; but these theories have no certainty: 'We are just guessing.' It is certain that the dead continue to live somehow, for they are believed to affect

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765 the lives and enter the dreams of their kinsmen; but the nature of
775 their survival is uncertain.

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765 A man, when he dies, is believed to join his ancestors. Until the end of the funeral rites, they say, he is on the way and if the ritual is not properly performed he does not reach them, but troubles the dreams and lives of the survivors until he is properly driven away. 'If you do not perform the ritual for your father or mother you may go mad or else have a slow and lingering death.'

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787 Many of the younger pagans, however, are affected by Christian belief. Young men spoke confidently of going after death 'to a fine country with dancing and feasting and a chief to rule us'. But many old men scoff at such beliefs. 'They have learnt them from the missionaries—how do they know, have they been there to see?' Among some of the younger men also the ritual of death is less important than it used to be. As one Christian said: 'The pagans no longer fear to die away from home—they used to fear very much to die in a strange country (and many still do), they thought: "If I die far from home I shall never reach my ancestors, for people will not bury me properly." Nor do all the young men now fear if they fail to attend a father's funeral ritual.' 'We no longer believe in the old rituals,' said a sophisticated young pagan, 'because we see that the Christians do not do these things and nothing happens to them.'

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754 An additional reason for fearing death is the Nyakyusa belief in the contagious character of many diseases. Death is thought to be caused sometimes by witchcraft, and sometimes by one of a variety of diseases. Of these diseases some are held to be hereditary and to run in families, and they are usually non-contagious; others, and they are usually contagious, are believed to be due to the sorcery of enemies. And the contagion is thought to be spread by an autopsy. It is especially dangerous to relatives; other people do not fear these diseases unless they actually hold the corpse in their arms, or dig the grave, or help to bury it, but all relatives are afraid.

764 Besides the contagion of specific diseases, the corpse itself is held always to have a vaguely defined, but none the less fearful, contagion of its own. And, because of this, all who have had any close contact with the body go to bathe immediately after the burial. Those of the chief mourners who hold the body in their arms, the grave-diggers and those who get down into the grave to bury it, all go to bathe. 'Even where death is not due to a contagious disease

it seems as if there was another disease in the corpse itself, it is a 764
stinking mass of disease.' Traditionally they use two medicinal plants to wash with, but in some chiefdoms near mission stations they now wash without them. The chief of one such country explained: 'In the old days they feared very much to eat before
bathing—but now sometimes they just wash their hands and eat. [177]
Of old they feared death, they feared lest the disease should spread, they wished to rid themselves of the contamination of the corpse. They used to wash with two plants—as medicine. Now they just
bathe in the stream or sometimes only just wash their hands.' But, [184]
particularly in chiefdoms at a distance from the centres of European influence, the fear of the contagion of death is still very strong.

Death then is, for the majority of pagan Nyakyusa, a fearful as 761
well as a grievous event; less fearful than it used to be to their 184
fathers, but more fearful by far to them than it is to their Christian neighbours.

(v) *The sacrifice*

At all except the very poorest burials one or more head of cattle 764
are killed. Cows are provided whenever possible, but, if no cows are available, bulls may be used instead. If the man who has died left cattle of his own, one at least of his herd is killed; if he has left none, his family make every effort to buy or borrow one, or else they provide one themselves from their own herds. If the dead man was rich, several of his cows will be killed. If his senior son has cattle of his own, he should kill one for his father ([illegible]) and if there are a number of grown-up sons the senior of each group of full brothers will offer a cow.

Not only the immediate family of a dead man but also the 764
fathers (or brothers) of his wives and the husbands of his full 602
sisters and daughters are expected to provide cows for killing at his burial, and if he is buried at his 'father's' place then his 'father's' affinal relatives also are expected to bring cattle or cloths. When a married woman dies, her husband and her own 'father' are expected each to provide a cow or a bull. Occasionally other affines of her husband bring calves, but less usually. More cattle are killed for men than for women. For a young child nothing is killed.

The cattle are killed either by the dead man's 'father' or by his 764
heir; if a woman has died, then by her husband. At a man's burial 764

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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[Facing p.20]

1. *Sacrifice and drums round the open grave*

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764 768 the killing has a legal implication, for the death of a man involves the transfer of his wives and property to another. If the inheritance is quite clear and disputes are unlikely, then a 'father' of the dead man tells the heir to kill the burial cattle. All the people present see him do this and know that he is the heir. And if the inheritance is, after all, denied him later, then the fact that he killed the cattle at his brother's (or father's) funeral gives him a strong *prima facie* claim to its recovery in the courts. If the inheritance is doubtful then a 'father' of the dead man kills the cattle. It is known that he himself cannot inherit and his killing of the cattle is an assertion of his authority to decide who shall do so.

643 764 When a man of the chief's lineage dies, a live cow is buried with him and the more general custom of taking a cow or bull to look into the grave is interpreted as being 'like burying the cow'. The cattle used in this way must be of the lineage stock and are reserved for sacrifice.

764 775 All the cattle killed are thought to go with the shade to the land of the dead (*[illegible]*) and it is believed that if he goes without any cattle he may be rejected by his kinsmen there. Tales are told of meeting dead men in the bush with their cattle which were killed for them. A cloth is a substitute for a cow and cloths which are buried likewise go with the dead. 'We will meet in the land of the shades and he will be wearing these cloths.' At one burial we saw, the dead man had left no cows of his own but his brothers killed two cows for him, three beasts were brought by affines, and sixteen cloths were brought by kinsmen, affines, and friends. 'Why', we asked, 'do you spend so much wealth at death?' 'Because, we say, as the owner has died let him take his wealth with him to the place of the shades. If he dies in lonely poverty he goes with nothing.' At another burial two beasts were brought by kinsmen, six by affines and one by a friend. There were thirty-two cloths, fifteen brought by kinsmen, twelve by affines, and five by friends. 'The bringing of cloths is to express sympathy (*[illegible]*); we bury many of them with the corpse, and some we leave over, which we bind on as mourning belts (*[illegible]*). Of old, people brought the cloth the Safwa weave, and brass body-rings. It means: "May our fellow go with them; may he swagger with them—with the cloth and body-rings (*[illegible]*)." And we pour out food that he may take it with him.'

764 During the course of the war-dance (described below) the young

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1. *Leaping on the newly filled grave*

[facing p.21]

men cut down some of the bananas which surround the huts and 764 the open place in front of them. 'The owner has died, it is a sign to [535] men that someone has died there.' 'We do it so that it should not seem as if he was still alive; if the bananas were not cut but all stood they would cause us to remember that he was recently alive.' 'We wish the dead man to take them with him to the land of the shades.' And for exactly the same reasons some of the calabashes and pots of a dead woman are broken at her burial, and saplings of the *ficus* used for making bark-cloth are cut down. We have seen older men get up and check the dancers from destroying too many bananas. They told us that 'in the old days we used to cut down all the bananas of a dead man and any crops that were growing [77] near the house also; but now we think that if we destroy all the food his children will die of hunger! So we just cut down a few bananas.' This destruction of food is connected with the belief that a man, when he dies, takes the fertility of the land with him, and this loss of fertility can only be avoided by the proper performance of the funeral ritual. The present moderation of the ritual destruction of food is, we think, an index of the decline of the power of the old belief; for the fear of future hunger, which now restrains them, used to encourage them to a greater sacrifice.

(*d*) *The wailing and dancing*

From the time of the death until the end of the three or four days of the burial rites, wailing continues intermittently. 'We weep because we grieve and tremble with fear.' The old women are the most persistent, next come the men and boys. 'The women weep all the time; even at night they only sleep a little, weeping and sleeping and then weeping again! But we men weep just once, when we first arrive, we do not go on and on.' The chief mourners (*abenemfwa*: lit. owners of the death) among the women, that is the mother, stepmothers, wives, sisters, daughters, and brothers' wives, spend most of the time inside one of the huts, which is the centre of the wailing. The other women spend some time inside the hut, wailing with the chief mourners, but then they move to make way for others and sit just outside. On the plain and in 764 Selya they sit packed close together and sway rhythmically as they 184 wail in chorus, following a leader who stands in their midst. Tears roll down her face as she chants short phrases ending in the high-pitched wail: 'Alas father! Alas! Aaaaaaaaaaaa! Farewell! Go So-and-so, farewell . . .'. we long for you, Father, farewell!' In the

765 hills the women who are outside do not bunch together, and the
184 wailing is both less rhythmical and less abandoned. The people of the plains laugh at them for not wailing properly. 'In the hills their funerals do not go well; each one wails separately. Here we listen to one another.' 'In Selya they lament a death properly; here [in the hills] they do not; they wail higgledy-piggledy, each one on her own. But we of Selya, and the people of MuNgonde and Masoko, we lead the wailing properly. There is always one person as leader and others follow her. If a woman does not follow, the leader will drive her away from the funeral saying "Wail alone". And if a widow wails out of time, they reprove her also saying: "Friend, we have come to lament at your funeral, but if you want to wail alone we will go and leave you with your husband." Then she agrees. . . . The leader speaks of the childhood and adult life of the deceased and concludes: "And then you died, farewell!" '

764 The chief mourners among the men—father, brothers, sons—go into the hut at first and wail with the women, but then they come out and sit with the men. Other male relatives, neighbours, and friends, as they arrive, go to the door of the hut, or just inside, and greet the women sympathetically; then they go and greet the chief mourners among the men and sit down with them. We asked the reason for the sympathetic greeting and were told: 'It is the custom at a burial; and when I die they will come to greet me also.' No exact line of division can be drawn between the wailing of the chief mourners and others, for some of the more distant male relatives go right inside and spend some time wailing and shedding tears. And both among the chief mourners and others the extent to which grief is thus expressed varies considerably.

In the groups of men and boys there is no wailing. The group of women outside wail intermittently at first, but later their attention is diverted to watching the burial dance. Those within the hut wail continuously before and for several hours after the burial, and on succeeding days they begin again each time new arrivals come into the hut to sympathize, and at nightfall as the crowds move off home.

Before the actual burial the body is kept in the hut and the chief women mourners hold it in their arms. One man expressed the opinion that, if a death occurred late in the evening or at night, the body should not be buried before noon the next day, so as to give people time 'to weep and assuage their grief, for they always wail more before the body is buried, when they can see the dead man'. Sometimes, immediately after the burial, the chief mourners, both men and women, wail outside near the newly-filled grave. 764

Very many of the women relatives, a few of the men relatives, and some of the neighbours smear their heads and faces with mud or pot-black as a sign of grief (*kw kasa*). Such an expression of grief is thought extravagant by the Christians who have themselves abandoned the custom. One Christian explained: 'The pagans smear themselves with mud because they tremble with fear at a death—but we do not tremble; the pagans are very sorrowful because they say: "Our friend has vanished from our eyes and we shall never meet him happily again."' 764 177

It is also the custom for the women relatives to bind one another's bellies with strips of bark-cloth, and for their women friends to bind them also. These bark-cloth belts are called *amakike* and symbolize the fearful grief and mutual sympathy of the mourners, and the sympathy of their friends. One woman, who was taking two belts to tie up the bellies of two mourning friends whose husband had died, explained: 'I give them these to tie round their bellies because they are all a-tremble, they are full of fear.' And when she was asked why men did not thus support one another, she replied: 'They are not afraid like women, they do not tremble much.' But there is evidence that, before the coming of the Europeans, men also wore *amakike* 'and even now if a chief dies his men often wear *amakike* for one day'. The Christian women have kept the custom, but they emphasize more the aspect of sympathy and less that of fear. 'If a woman wears many belts at a burial that means she has many friends; her passionate grief is comforted by their friendship.' 292 764 [177] [574]

Sometimes on the first day, and usually on the last two or three days of a burial, there is dancing as well as wailing. Dancing begins late in the morning to the accompaniment of three or four drums, in the swept courtyard of the dead man's homestead; gradually it attracts more and more dancers, more and more of the attention of the onlookers, until the wailing is confined to the chief women mourners inside the hut, and the dance is the most conspicuous part of the proceedings. It is led by young men dressed in a special costume of ankle-bells and cloth skirts and, traditionally, bedaubed with red and white clay. All hold spears and leap wildly about, stamping down the soft earth of the grave as they dance. There is little common movement, each dancer 535 764 [542] [302]

764 535 alone as if fighting a single combat. Among the men some of the women move about, singly or in twos and threes, calling the war-cry and swinging their hips in a kind of rhythmical walk. Under a tropical sun in a damp heat, with the thermometer often over 90° F. in the shade, they dance for hours. In the dust and noise and excitement there are no very apparent signs of grief; and yet if you ask the onlookers what it is all about they reply: 'They are mourning the dead.'

764 535 721 177 This burial dance is traditionally a dance of war; now, as also in former times, it provides those men who are most affected by grief and fear with a violent and passionate means of expression, in which their feelings are assuaged by the touch of life; for the others it was, in the old days, an assertion of their own and their dead neighbour's warlike quality, and this significance is still vividly present to their minds; but, after a generation and more of peace, its content is changing and the sexual element, always present in it, is rapidly dominating the old memories.

764 535 721 'This war-dance (*ukukina*)', said an old man, 'is mourning, we are mourning the dead man. We dance because there is war in our hearts. A passion of grief and fear exasperates us (*ilyojo likutusila*).' Since this statement is the clue to both the present and the traditional meaning of the war-dance for the chief mourners, we must examine the language carefully. *Ilyojo* means a passion of grief, anger or fear; *ukusila* means to annoy or exasperate beyond endurance. In explaining *ukusila* one man put it like this: 'If a man continually insults me then he exasperates me (*ukusila*) so that I want to fight him.' Death is a fearful and grievous event that exasperates those men nearly concerned and makes them want to fight. The chief mourners and personal friends among the women assuage their feelings in the wailing, among the men in the war-dance. 'A kinsman, when he dances, assuages his passionate grief (*ilyojo*); he goes into the house to weep and then he comes out and dances the war-dance; his passionate grief is made tolerable in the dance (lit. he is able to endure it there, in the dance), it bound his heart and the dance assuages it.'

This exasperated and fearful grief was linked in traditional expression with a general salute to the warlike quality of man. Those of old said: 'The dead man was a lively dancer in battle, and now he is dead we dance for him, he too was a fighting dancer!' 'He was a warrior (lit. a man of the spear), we dance now, as he danced himself, the dance of war.' And this salute at the same time gave

to the dancers a heightened sense of their own warlike quality: 784 ●
'We used not actually to fight at burials so much as to dance and 535
become conscious of our strength for future wars against other 721
chiefdoms, where, on another day, we would go to raid their cows.'

But although an actual fight was not a necessary part of the 578
funeral it very frequently occurred, and burials are still one of 764
the most usual occasions of spearing. 'In the old days, before the 721
country was at peace, we men often fought at burials; we ran in 535
front spearing one another, while our wives ran behind calling the war-cry and watching the prowess of their husbands.' So far from rituals having the sole function of promoting social integration, as [82] some would have us believe, the burial rites of the Nyakyusa were occasions on which existing antipathies continually found overt expression in fighting and new antipathies arose; but the quarrels were not within the mourning lineage.

The fights normally followed the lines of division between chiefdom and chiefdom, village and village. Kinship and affinity have always for some men extended beyond the single chiefdom; and to the burials of these people, if they are in any way eminent, the young men of other chiefdoms often come to dance. And while today, with a well-established tradition of peace, there are fewer smouldering enmities between chiefdoms, forty or fifty years ago it was scarcely possible for the young men of two chiefs to meet peaceably; cattle-raids, abductions of women, defeats and victories in battle were too hot in the memory. Sometimes an accidental jostling, sometimes a deliberate insult was the occasion for a running fight.

> At burials there was often war. If the men of two chiefdoms were there together at a burial they would quarrel and fight. Sometimes the fight began when one hurled his spear into the ground and then pulled it up so as to pitch earth on to another man. Perhaps there would be only a few men dancing at first and many sitting down; but when a neighbouring chief was heard coming with his men, and the sound of the trumpet and flute[1] came to us, then we said: 'If we sit still they will say there were no men but only women at that burial, let us dance too!' So we would get up and dance, and then if the others did anything there would be war.

And fights sometimes occurred between two villages of the same chief.

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[1] The trumpet of horn and the bamboo flute which used to accompany the war-dance. They are now seldom heard; drums have superseded them.

764 535 721 Besides fighting, the dancers indulge in an orgy of destruction, slashing at the bananas and *fosi* saplings (which surround the swept courtyard) with their spears.

764 535 152 The dance was thus, traditionally, a common form for the expression by the dancers of a considerable range of emotions, varying from an intolerable burden of grief and fear to a recognition of and salute to the warlike quality of the dead man and a vivid consciousness of their own. And this last feeling passed easily into actual fighting.

764 534 832 To-day it is not so much into the excitements of warfare that the feelings turn, but rather into those of love. Burial dances are the occasions of much sexual display, of the beginning of some love affairs and the consummation of others, and this is nothing new. 'At a death people did not want war (though it came sometimes), they wanted love-making; they displayed the pride of their strength!' 'We speared one another . . . our wives called the war-cry when they saw the strength of their husbands.'

177 535 837 Dances of sexual display, on occasions other than burials, are traditional among the Nyakyusa; but all our informants are unanimous in declaring that both these other dances and the dances of burial are far more frequently followed by lovers' meetings than they used to be. For the enforcement of peace among the Nyakyusa has been accompanied by the prohibition of violence of any kind; and this has freed sexual passion from its rigid traditional bonds. [684] Girls are married young and engaged younger; and while formerly any man who seduced or even flirted with another man's betrothed or wife was speared or tortured by the husband and his friends if they caught him, such punishments are now illegal and the present fine of cattle is a far less effective deterrent. 'In the old days love-making only went on in secret; if a man stood and talked to a woman he expected to be speared. But now the Europeans have introduced the custom of making love openly!' (i.e. by forbidding the previous penalties.)

764 535 832 For all the younger men and women, save the chief mourners and close friends, the quality of the burial dance is now predominantly and openly sexual. But the older people are, on the one hand, more conscious of its warlike associations and, on the other hand, inclined to regard the whole occasion more soberly than their juniors. 'There are two reasons for coming to a burial: the old men come to mourn their friend, they say: "Let us go and mourn him"; but the young men say: "Let us follow the

tradition of the leaping dance and show ourselves to the girls!" 764
And so it is with the women, some of the young women do not 535
come to mourn but to call the war-cry to the boys! Those who 832
come to mourn go into the hut and weep and weep. The young men say that they dance by reason of the women. The old men say that in the past it was different, it was war; the women ran behind the fighters watching the battle and calling the war-cry. And we all say that the present custom of dancing is the softer custom of a peaceful land.'

As the old significance of the dance to the majority of the participants was a lively salute to the dead man's fighting quality and a heightened sense of their own, so now it is his sexual quality which they honour and their own which they enjoy. 'Why', we asked a young man, 'do you dance nowadays at burials? There is little or no warfare and the dead man was never a fighter!' His answer came almost in the traditional form of words: 'We think that he too danced before the women, he was a brave dancer (*mogi*), and so we too dance (*ukukina*) at his death.'

'He too was a brave dancer (*mogi*).' The word *mogi* is from the 535
verb *ukumoga* which refers to the ordinary dances of sexual display 764
in contrast to the war-dance (*ukukina*). It is the war-dance which 721
is still normally danced at death. Not only, however, is its signi- 832
ficance being assimilated to that of the ordinary dances of recre- 177
ation, as this quotation clearly shows, but these other dances are now often performed at burials. Near Rungwe Mission the pagans dance the war-dance on the first day of a burial and sometimes on the second day as well, but always on the third day the dance is changed. The men abandon cloth skirts, spears, and ankle-bells [242]
and put on their best clothes, an ample white toga being particularly fashionable; the women adorn themselves with great care and some put roses in their hair. The dance is no longer a wild *mêlée*, but is slow and graceful; and its sexual significance is now apparent, not only in the faces of the dancers and the comments of the bystanders, but also in the forms of movement.

This custom is new. None of the chief mourners takes part in the 535
dance, though they watch it. In the war-dance, however, the chief 764
mourners among the men are expected to participate, and some 721
of them always do so. 'The (men) relatives dance if they have 177
strength, they weep first and then dance. For if they all sit still and no one of them dances we others say that they have not mourned him properly.' But they do not all dance. One old man whose

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764 brother had just been buried said: 'Those who are really sad sit
721 quite still and silent.' But he was an old man with little strength
177 for dancing; on the first day of his brother's burial he sat still, but
on the second day he danced a little.

As for the women who participate in the war-dance, running about among the men and calling the war-cry, their behaviour is clearly distinguished in accordance with their relationship to the dead man. 'The distant (women) relations dance in their dirt, they cannot adorn themselves much, but non-relatives adorn themselves. The wives and sisters of a dead man and the nearer women relatives are the chief mourners and they cannot dance at the burial. They are truly grieved. If a wife danced we'd say she did not love her husband—well, perhaps she might wander round distraught to the sound of the drums, but with grief on her face and without looking at the young men! If she looked at the young men we'd say she did not love her husband. If a brother's wife danced we should laugh at her and say she was no kinswoman of the dead man! But for a man it is different, he dances with his grief to enable his heart to bear it. In the old days, if there was a fight, the chief women mourners did not follow and call the war-cry, but the others; all the men went to fight but not all the women to watch.'

535 Our observation shows that there is just as much dancing at the
764 burials of women as at those of men. Here too the dance, as now
177 performed, combines the two functions: assuaging the fearful grief
832 of some people and providing a sexual display in honour of the
727 dead: 'We dance at her burial, for she too was a brave dancer
(*mugi*).' But in the old days also there was dancing at women's burials: 'For a woman', one old man explained, 'bears us men, so that she too is a warrior.' 'In the past,' said another old man, 'we did dance at women's burials, only a little, not so much as at men's; we said that she was only a woman, but that none the less she also was concerned in war.'

The change in the quality of the burial dance is one of emphasis only; in the past also the sexual element was present: 'We danced so that the women should see our strength'—but it was not dominant. And the warlike quality which was then dominant has by no means disappeared; we heard of many spear-fights at burial dances. At one of them the chief, in order to prevent its continuance, made the dancers abandon the war-dance and finish the funeral with the ordinary dances of sexual display.

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764 The emotional quality of mourning (*ukulila*) is different in

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Nyakyusa pagan society from its quality in England. The word *ukulila* in other contexts means to cry, weep, or complain aloud; at burial it is used to refer specifically to the wailing, and by extension to the whole of the ritual. The quality of Nyakyusa mourning is both more openly terrified and grief-stricken and also more lively than in England. And these two qualities of fearful grief and vivacity are very closely connected.

That some at least of those who attend a Nyakyusa burial are moved by grief it is easy to establish. We have heard people talking regretfully in ordinary conversation of a man's death; we have seen a man whose sister had just died walk over alone towards her grave and weep quietly by himself without any parade of grief; and we have heard of a man killing himself because of his grief for a dead son. But, even among the chief mourners, they are not all grieved: 'There are some men', said an old woman, 'who have no sorrow when their wives die. J., when his wife died, was quite unmoved; and some women are not much upset when they lose their husbands. L. was not when her husband died; perhaps she was thinking of marrying again, for she was quite young. But old women are always grieved for they cannot marry again.'

Whatever their private feelings may be, however, the chief mourners and other relatives are obliged for very shame to show [579] signs of grief. The chief women mourners, as we have seen, may not dance; the more distant women relatives may not adorn themselves; and all the chief mourners, both men and women, are expected to weep and shed tears. We have seen an old man weeping at his half-brother's burial, although the two had, notoriously, been on very bad terms and had hardly spoken to each other for years. And all relatives, however distant, who come to a burial are expected to greet the chief mourners sympathetically. Very many non-relatives do so too, but they may omit the greeting without offence, if there is a great crowd present.

We have plenty of evidence that the grief at death is largely mixed with fear. It is, indeed, probable that the fear of death (fear of their own future death, fear of the shades, fear of the contagion of the corpse) touches some people at a burial more deeply than grief. Be this as it may, it is clear that the mourning is, for some, an expression of real fears. And it is the relatives, above all, who are afraid. Neither contagious diseases nor subsequent affliction by the shades, nor the vague contagion of the corpse concern any non-relatives, except those who dig the grave and bury the dead

781 764 man; but all kinsmen and affines fear contagion, and the family fear spiritual afflictions as well.

[811] These fears are dealt with in two ways: fear is an immediate state of feeling which the Nyakyusa, on this occasion, express and make tolerable in the wailing, the dancing, and so on; but their terror is also rationalized[1] as a fear of certain specific events proceeding from religious causes, and thus is pacified by various ritual actions which are believed effectively to prevent these happenings. The killing of cows, the washing with magical plants, the subsequent ritual of protection—all these are designed to check the occurrence of fearful events.

781 764 721 535 But still the fear, as an actual state of feeling at the time of a death, has to be expressed in some tolerable form. Its expression in the wailing associated with grief is already clear; and it is also proved that the war-dance is, for the men most affected, both an expression and an alleviation of their terrified grief. 'There is war in our hearts—a passion of fear and grief exasperates us—it is made tolerable in the dance.'

781 764 It is the attitude of the chief mourners that is the clue to the whole ritual; and the contrast between terrified wailing and lively dancing, which seems very strange at first to a European observer, is explained by it. The fear and sorrow of death are only emotionally tolerable if their expression is followed by, or combined with, an assertion of life. This is certainly true of the Nyakyusa, and possibly it is universally true. Having no confident expectation of happiness in a future life, these pagan Africans turn at burial to a realization of present life in its most intense quality, to the war-dance, to sexual display, to lively talk, and to the eating of great quantities of meat.

And to this emotional reaction of the chief mourners the sympathetic vivacity of other people is essential. The Nyakyusa were astonished to hear of the sobriety of an English funeral: 'We talk and dance to comfort the relatives. If we others sat sad and glum, then the grief of the relatives would far exceed ours. If we just sorrowed what depths of grief would they not reach? And so we sit and talk and laugh and dance until the relatives laugh too.' And they were even more surprised at the suggestion that anyone might wish for privacy. 'We are quite different: we keep people company, when a relative has died, to cheer them. I am comburied, I think people follow the custom, many have come to see me.' 781 [illegible]

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[1] The word 'rationalize' properly implies neither truth nor falsehood of thought, but simply the fact of its existence.

There is no criticism of men or women who come to a burial to dance rather than to weep: 'They are not relatives—it is our custom of mourning.' They are saluting the dead and 'seeing him on his way', they are helping 'to comfort the relatives'. The presence of non-relatives at a burial is variously determined by feelings of affection and grief, of respect and sympathy for the family, by a sense of shame, by fear of being accused of witchcraft, and finally by the attraction of the crowds, the lively conversation, the dancing, and the meat. [183]

At the burial of a Nyakyusa Christian there is little unrestrained wailing and no dancing; instead the young men of the congregation gather round the grieving relatives and sing cheerful hymns, full of the certainty of Heaven, 'to accompany him on his way to God' and 'to comfort the mourners'. 781 764 775 184

(e) *Prestige at funerals*

As has already been indicated, the length of the mourning depends upon the status of the deceased. It is short for a child—there is no sacrifice and no crowd; for a rich man it is longer than for a poor man; for the kinsman of a chief longer than for a commoner. Mwaikambo explained: 764 555 556

> Many conceal their position (*ubufumuka*), it only appears at death. People may never know that a man is rich—only those who build close to him will know—but when he dies many know; many people come to the funeral. For a commoner, an ordinary person, the drums usually play a lament for two days only, sometimes for three, but for a village headman they play the lament for four days, or perhaps a week, and also for a man who has married a chief's daughter it continues for four days or a week. Then people ask why the drums are playing for so long and the reply comes: 'He married into the chief's family. The chief honours him in kinship.' Drums follow the importance of a man.
>
> Those who stay longest at a funeral are kinsmen. If a man has many kinsmen then the funeral will last long because his kinsmen do not return home quickly. A chief has many kinsmen, more than anyone else, because the people of his chiefdom are all like kinsmen. With a village headman also the people who build with him are somewhat like kinsmen, and his funeral lasts a long time.

The size of the crowd at a funeral depends very largely upon the amount of meat provided, and this in turn depends upon the 764 556

764 556 wealth of the family in cattle and the number of its affines. There is a direct relationship between the number of cattle killed and the number of people who come to a burial. On one occasion we were told: 'There are not many people here because there is little meat; they only killed one bull!' And this connection can be observed at any burial; hundreds of people come to mourn the rich, only a few to mourn the poor. And if no meat is killed there is usually no dancing at all. But once a crowd has gathered it is in itself an inducement to others to come. When men were dancing the funeral dance in the rain a neighbour commented: 'They will say there is no rain for many women are present.' We have seen a crowd of 2,000 or more at a funeral, with 100 men dancing at once.

The meat is divided among the chief, the relatives, the neighbours, and the non-relatives from a distance. To the chief of the country is given the breast and ribs of one beast: 'This is to honour him.' To each affine who brings a beast a whole leg is returned to be eaten. To the various groups of non-relatives from other chiefdoms is given sometimes a side, sometimes a leg, and the rest of the meat is divided between the relatives and neighbours who have come from the same or adjoining villages. At large funerals, where many cows are killed and where people gather from all the villages of the chiefdom, a portion of the meat is presented to each of the various village headmen to eat with his men; at smaller funerals the division is made less formally.

'A man's very own cow, that of his lineage, is eaten by the people of the country, not the relatives, because the people [non-relatives] always looked at it thinking: "It's ours."' A picture of ghoulish expectation? That indeed is an element of Nyakyusa thought. While we were in the country a number of chiefs forbade the [757] offering of funeral meat to non-relatives, for, it was believed, gluttonous neighbours sometimes killed a man by witchcraft[1] in order to feast at his funeral.

The kinsmen of the dead man gain prestige from a lavish funeral. They are compelled to sacrifice by fear lest the anger of the shades, or the 'breath' of their neighbours, should bring misfortune upon them, and they are rewarded by the admiration of men when they do so.

764 626 Social pressure is not always exerted upon the members of the dead man's family to provide cattle themselves. If he left sufficient cattle to sustain the family dignity they only kill from his own

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 93.

764 626 herd. But if he has not left sufficient, then they are ashamed not to make good the deficiency. 'If no cows are killed at a burial we others [non-relatives] say that it was a mean burial, that the dead man was a pauper without kin, for if he had had kinsmen they would have killed cows for him. So then the relatives grieve their poor griefs alone, we others don't go to that burial.' To a poor burial the members of the same village do in fact come, as they are obliged to do; but few other people come, and there is seldom any dancing.

764 There is one other situation in which a member of the family is under obligation to kill. If the dead man is buried by his 'father' at his 'father's' place, then one of his 'father's' cows must be killed. But if his 'father' does not choose to exercise his privilege of carrying the body to his place for burial (and he need not do so unless he wishes), then there is no such obligation.

Upon affines, however, the obligation is absolute, unless they actually have not got a cow or bull available. 'If a father-in-law brings no beast to his son-in-law's burial, then his daughter is estranged from him, she asks angrily why he does not bring one, seeing that her husband has died.' 'If a son-in-law does not bring a cow to his father-in-law's burial, though he has one that he might have brought, he is ashamed before men. They say to him: "Your wife's father has died, why did you not bring a cow? Perhaps you think you have a father-in-law still alive (i.e. the dead man's heir, to whom all previous obligations are due, and with whom the relationship of affinity continues very much as before), but he himself, your own father-in-law, has died."' And thus, if insufficient cows are killed to maintain the family dignity, both the family and the affines are made to feel ashamed.

[572] Occasionally a friend of the dead man, who is no relative, brings a bull to kill, as a sign of friendship and affection, but he has no obligation to do so.

764 556 Social position, both in its practical aspect of authority and in its emotion aspect of prestige, depends primarily, among the Nyakyusa, on the generous use of wealth, or, to put it more simply, on feeding people. The Nyakyusa insisted on this again and again in explaining the relative status of different people: one man is great and distinguished (*asigye*) because he feeds people, another who feeds people less is less distinguished. At a lavish funeral, where many people gather and eat meat, they go home in

764 556 the evening saying with admiration that it was a most impressive (ukipa) burial; months or years afterwards it is still remembered and described with pride by the family, with admiration by the neighbours. What is chiefly remembered is the number of cattle killed and the number of people present; sometimes the vigour of the women's wailing and of the men's dancing is also described.

(*f*) *A particular burial* (recorded by G. W.)

764 It is the second day; the man, who was quite young, died yesterday afternoon and was buried early this morning. I arrive at 7.30 a.m. to find that the wailing is the dominant activity. The dead man's house is full of weeping men and women, shedding tears and wailing in the conventional high-pitched voice. His sister, his young wife, a step-mother, a classificatory brother and two half-brothers, with many other women, are inside the house. The noise is considerable. The rest of the women, fifty or more, are seated just outside, in and around an unfinished bamboo house which he died leaving half-built; they too are weeping and wailing. A few men are seated in a group on the opposite side of the swept place facing the women; they are either silent or talking soberly.

764 781 The emotional pitch is very high. The classificatory brother leaves the house and walks about round the new grave with his hands to his head, shedding tears and calling: 'Alas! Alas! What kin are left? Alas! What kin are left?' He is a mature man about forty years old. Then he takes by the hand a half-sister of the dead man, a woman of thirty or more, smothered in mud and pot-black, her belly supported by many bark-cloths, and with a baby on her back; together they walk over the grave weeping and wailing, addressing each other in words that I fail to distinguish, and stumbling about as though blind with grief. The baby sleeps quietly all the time. Then comes an old woman, stepmother of the dead man, leading a daughter in each hand (his half-sisters), all wailing, shedding tears and calling out indistinguishable words. They sit down on the newly-filled grave with their arms on one another's shoulders rocking to and fro and weeping. More people keep arriving and in the background now is the insistent wailing of seventy or a hundred women in and outside the house.

For the first hour after my arrival the drums are only occasionally beaten, and a few young men rush across the grave brandishing spears, but only spasmodically.

The two half-brothers, after wailing in the house, come outside and walk up and down together still weeping. Then they each take a spear and run back and forth several times wailing the dead man's name.

One of the half-sisters, meanwhile, rolls over and over in the fresh earth 764
of the grave in passionate contortions, with the tears running down her 781
cheeks. Gradually a group of women relatives collects on the grave, eight or nine of them; they sit huddled up together with their arms on one another's shoulders wailing. One woman, before she sits down, makes a series of trembling gestures towards the grave, crying out '[illegible]' in fearful grief.

Then, at last, the drums begin in earnest and the young men start to 764
dance. The insistent vital rhythm of the drums contrasts sharply with 535
the grief and despair of the wailing. The situation begins to change. Still in the house the wailing is loud and continuous, but the women on the grave give place to the dancers and return to the house, while the group of women outside gradually ceases wailing and turns all its attention to the dance. The conversation among the men changes also, some are silent now and the talk is more eager than before. Soon the dancers begin to cut the bananas; one stem falls full on a young man's head, causing loud laughter among the onlookers. But at first the dance, though always lively, is by no means wholly gay. The male kinsmen dance with grief in their looks, calling out 'Alas!' as each shakes his spear.

No women are yet dancing at all; two or three kinswomen wander about distraught, and one of the half-sisters in particular seems quite blind to the dancers, who have to get out of her way. The situation is, however, a lively one, and it becomes livelier still as the young men from another village come to join in, bringing three more drums with them. Six drums are now being beaten and about thirty young men are dancing. Two hours have passed since I first arrived.

At 4.30 p.m. I am back again to find the scene changed once more. There is no sound of wailing, not even inside the house. About a hundred men are either dancing or standing round looking on, with a number of girls walking rhythmically about among the dancers. These girls are non-relatives and adorned with great finish.

The young men leap and dance, some with more agility than others; 764
they stamp, roll on the ground, leap in the air, turn somersaults, hurl 535
their spears into the earth and fight invisible enemies. All the spectators, 781
save the chief women mourners and one or two of the men, seem lively and excited. I see the young wife of the dead man looking tired and sad, and she and the other women chief mourners spend most of the time in the house; but one of the half-brothers, on the other hand, who appeared to be so greatly affected seven or eight hours before, is laughing gaily as he dances.

Two cows have been killed and are now being cut up. As the sun 764
sinks and the dancers go away home, taking their meat with them, the relatives and near neighbours gather round fires and begin to roast and eat the meat. Some is given separately to the groups of friends from

764 other chiefdoms; and by the next morning the whole of the two cows is finished. Wailing and dancing continue for two days more. 'It was a grand burial' people say afterwards, 'we have seen him on his way (to the land of shades) properly.'

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768 washing and the throwing away of a stem of bananas and leaves in a stream, and bringing back a hen and bark-cloth; eating a mash on the hearth; the brewing of beer with the millet presented; a ritual drinking and further shaving when this is ripe; an admonition of the heir on his duties and acknowledgement of him as 'father' by the children of the deceased; sexual intercourse between the heir and the widows he inherits; the burial by each inherited woman of some of the fluids from that intercourse in her father's banana grove, and a ritual drinking of beer with her father and other close relatives.

If the deceased is a woman her brother comes to cut her husband's banana grove and seize her children, as a sign that kinship between the lineages has ceased, but he is dissuaded with gifts, and treats his sister's children with medicines. A sister is sent to replace the dead woman, the widower has intercourse with her at 'the shaving of the sprouting hair', and she returns home to bury some of the fluids in her father's grove, and drink beer with him ritually.

An account of one of the rituals which we attended in Selya which is quoted in the documents (p. 134) may give some reality to this stark outline.

(b) The overt purpose and symbolism

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764
828 When asked why the ritual of death is performed the first reply of Nyakyusa informants was that they were driving away (*ukubinga*) the dead and that if it were neglected those for whom it should have been performed would go mad (*ukukopa ilipili*). Angombwike explained: 'In the death ritual they drive away the shade (*unsyuka*) saying: "Why are you always at me, nagging at me, in dreams?" It is to swear at him (the shade) and drive him away.'

Another informant explained: 'The touching of the earth is the expression of the wish that he will not come into our dreams and thoughts any more, and he does not!' Another confirmed this saying: 'The powdered medicine and touching the earth are alike;
765 they wish to stop him (the deceased) coming into our dreams.'
764 And an Ndali informant said: 'Shaving is to get rid of the shade which was on their bodies.'

775 There is also the implication of speeding the deceased on his way to the land of the shades, for it is believed that if the ritual is not performed he will not be welcomed by his dead kinsmen and will continue to haunt the living. Of an unfinished death ritual

people say: '*Tukali ukulaga unsyuka* (We have not yet bidden 764
farewell to the shade),' *ukulaga* being the word used for bidding a 765
courteous farewell to departing guests. Mwaisumo elaborated the 775
point. He said: 'The death ritual is a saying good-bye, it is to see off the dead man accompanying him on his way (*ukumsindikila*); to demonstrate that we have buried him indeed, and to pray that forgetfulness may now come on us.' Another informant explained: 'Touching the earth is to say "Good-bye, friend."'

The danger of madness was given as the reason both for the 764
whole ritual and for many separate actions in it. 'You go mad if 766
you do not shave after a death,' said the wife of the chief Mwaihojo. 826
'You go mad if you keep the hair of the corpse (*insisi gya mfimba*),'
said Mwandisi, the old blind historian, and he went on: 'Yes, 753
much madness comes from the shades if you have neglected the 828
death ritual for a wife or for parents, and the ritual at puberty also. Madness comes from the shades and from Kyala. And if a woman refuses to perform the ritual for her husband who has died, and refuses to lie down with the heir, she also goes mad.' If someone does go mad the cause is usually said to be neglect of the death ritual or some mistake in its performance.

Other types of illness are also attributed to neglect of the death 753
ritual. Kasitile was ailing and thought that his illness was due 764
partly to the fact that he had not completed the death ritual for a 765
relative. Mwilabe said of the sweeping in the ritual: 'They sweep round their legs lest their bodies become swollen and sick. It is said that their bodies will swell if they attend the ritual of someone else and this is done and they themselves have not been swept over.' Several informants mentioned 'a lingering and painful death' (a terror often spoken of by the Nyakyusa) as the penalty for neglecting a ritual, and the last part of the ritual is expressly interpreted as a prophylactic against the 'gasping cough'.

Finally, it is said that the crops will not flourish if the ritual is 241
neglected. Kakuju, a village headman of Selya, was explicit on 764
the point: 'If you do not bury your father properly the food will 765
disappear. They (the diviners) will tell you to find something and when beer has been left overnight outside in the banana grove you pray to the shade.' The fear that the crops will not flourish is not mentioned so frequently as the danger of madness, but it is a general notion.

The danger of madness or other illness coming on one is thought 764
to be greatest if a man tastes the ritual food or beer, or is sprinkled 765
828

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764 by the dust, at some other funeral without having completed the
765 ritual for his own parents, and the danger of the 'gasping cough'
828 exists only when a widow, having lain with the heir, eats or drinks
with her own relatives.

796 Everyone knows the connection between madness and the performance of the whole ritual and between coughing and the final act, but not everyone is conscious of the symbolism of the various events. For example, Mwakisisile, a middle-aged pagan man whom we knew well, could not interpret the details of the symbolism and he explained: 'Some ask about these things in the ritual, some do not ask. I have not asked. We only know, many of us, that in the ritual we drive the shade, who is here, away from the body, and that if we do not drive him away we run mad. But we do not understand the details of the ritual such as straining water through a leaf, or passing the baskets between the legs, so as to be able to say: "This detail means this." ' Those most conscious of the symbolism are the *abanyago*, the officiants at the family rituals and the priests of the communal rituals. Kasitile, the hereditary rain-maker of Selya, who was a close friend of Godfrey Wilson's, and formally presented him to his dead ancestors urging them 'not to be startled at a white face', was our foremost authority on the symbolism of the Selya ritual. He was more conscious of the symbolism than most people, but his interpretation was confirmed at almost every point by others. Kasitile was not paid for
[124] information—none of our informants was—but he and Godfrey Wilson exchanged gifts from time to time in the manner customary among the Nyakyusa, and he often had a meal with us. Mwandisi, a very old blind chief living on the Lake-shore plain (MuNgonde) who was regarded by the Nyakyusa themselves as an authority on history and custom, was also a friend prepared to expound the
[184] rituals. His interpretation contradicted Kasitile's on one point only—he denied that one purpose of the ritual was to bring back the shade into the house. Other informants, though less coherent, corroborated Kasitile's interpretation, which may therefore be taken as a general, not a personal one.

764 There are nine main themes in the ritual: first, the driving away
765 of the dead from the dreams of his close kinsmen, and measures to
796 prevent him 'brooding over them' (*ukobatela*)—the word is that used
of a hen brooding over her chickens. Widows, in particular, must be separated from the shade of their husband before the heir (or any other man) dare have intercourse with them. Secondly, the

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identification of the mourners with the corpse and the separation 764
of the shade from both of them. 'What they do to the participants 765
they do to the deceased. . . . If they are not cleansed he is still 796
muddy. . . . We throw away the corpse, the contamination of death, into the river . . . we drive the shade away off our bodies to join his fellows . . . we separate the corpse and the shade.' Thirdly, bringing back the shade as a beneficent spirit into the home. 'In the ritual we tell the shade to go away and join his fellows, and then to come back with them and warm himself by the fire in our house. . . . At first the shade is in our bodies, we cast him out . . . at first it is as if we were still holding the corpse in our arms, but we throw the corpse away into the river . . . the shade we bring back into our house.'

Fourthly, a miming of the actions of a madman in eating excrement as a prophylactic against behaviour of that sort. The dead, if not separated from the living, bring madness upon them, and simulating madness is a protection against it.

Fifthly, the corpse and faeces are identified: 'The corpse is filth, it is excrement. And so when a madman for whom they have not performed the ritual eats filth that is the corpse, he is still holding it, they have not done the ritual for him.'

Sixthly, the shades are identified with semen and seeds and their
control over potency and fertility is recognized. The Nyakyusa [789
think that they are always present in sexual intercourse, and sym- 842]
bols of sexual intercourse are interpreted as a means of driving out the shade from the participants' bodies.

Seventhly, 'the food which he hoed' is symbolically 'given to the shade' of the man who has just died and he is urged to be satisfied: 'You, shade, do not think there was little food at your ritual. . . . The food which we have eaten you have eaten . . . do not create hunger.'

Eighthly, the shade is acknowledged as a kinsman by eating with him food and beer mixed with *ikipiki*—the symbol of agnatic kinship—before he is driven away.

Lastly, a dead man is formally replaced by his heir, a woman by her sister or her brother's daughter.

These conceptions are expressed in the following texts which are
given as they were recorded by Godfrey Wilson. No attempt has [128]
been made to systematize Kasitile's or Mwandisi's arguments, but the statements made during numerous sessions have been placed in sequence, and are separated only by dots.

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●764 i. *Kasitile's interpretation.* (Recorded by G. W. in Nyakyusa and
765 translated by him shortly afterwards.)[1]

775 KASITILE: We go to bathe wearing leaves, we throw them away, we bathe, then we come back and shave our hair. This means we are driving away the shade (*unsyuka*), for at first he is in our bodies. Our fathers told us: 'When I die I shall not reach the place of the shades unless you do the ritual for me; those who preceded me will drive me back saying: "You are not one of us, you cannot come, they have not yet done your ritual." For the shades linger on the way at first, they do not reach their place.' We do the ritual so as to tell the shade: 'We have given you everything, now go away and may your fellow shades receive you, do not come here.'

764 When we return from bathing we put a banana in the ground with
765 a pumpkin-seed and a lentil in it. We stoop and bite a piece off, and
828 then we shave the hair. There is much idiocy (*ubulema*) if you do not perform the ritual, and madness (*ikigili*), or perhaps you will have a lingering death. The shade is in the body, he causes madness (*ikigili*), he says: 'Why have you not done the ritual?' The shades pound and stamp the body.

Mwambuputa (a village headman) joining in the conversation said:

775 All this round us [with a sweeping gesture] is the place of the shades.
764 What we have buried is only the body, to prevent it stinking, but the heart (*indumbula*) stays here.

KASITILE: The banana which we bite in the ground is like the
764 sausages of porridge of the Kukwe, it is excrement, it is filth; because
765 I think that if I do not perform the ritual I may run mad and eat filth.
828 Also before this they beat up a mash of cowpeas, they take it with a spoon and put it against the wall, and one by one we come and eat. This also is eating filth so that we may escape and be clean.

[177] Madness (*ikigili*)[2] is of two kinds, one comes from Kyala (but we used to say from Mbasi, we did not say Kyala) and one from ritual. Mwaipopo (the chief) had the madness (*ikigili*); it is in his family on his mother's side. This is the madness of Mbasi, they do their rituals all right. Mbasi is he who lived with my father here. He called 'Kanjuki! Kanjuki!' from the hillside; then my mother would cook him some food
764 and my father would put something out for him.[3] When we perform
765 the rituals the shades are very pleased to see it; of old you might hear
775 them clapping their hands in the evening here, after we had finished a
826 ritual. But they have gone away now. . . . Yes, the shades are filthy

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[1] I have made minor changes in the translation.

[2] Distinguished from a trance or epileptic fit, *ukukoma amalago*.

[3] See *Communal Rituals among the Nyakyusa* (in preparation).

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(*banyali*), they are in the body at first, they shake it and you fall ill; 764
they say: 'You are still muddy, you have not done the ritual.' . . . 765
When a man dies his heart (*indumbula*) and his body (*umfimba*) separate, 775
they are divorced, the heart with the blood (*ililopa*) and the shadow 828
(*ilisyungulu*) are separated from the corpse which rots in the ground.
The corpse is filth, it is excrement. And so when a madman, for whom they have not performed the ritual, eats filth, that is the corpse, he is still holding it, they have not done the ritual for him. If they have not done the ritual for the shade his fellows drive him back and say: 'You cannot come yet, you are still muddy, they have not bathe you in the river.' . . .

Yes, that which they do to my body, to me the heir (or the relative) they do to the shade himself. He, the corpse, is earthy, muddy. That is why we smear ourselves with mud, we mourners; it is this earth that we drive away in the ritual, it is mud, it is the corpse. . . .

The hair of the mourners which we shave in the ritual is one with the hair of the corpse, it is his. We wash and shave and anoint him and he goes to his own place. . . .

First we bite the banana with the seeds stuck into it in the ground, and then we eat bananas and seeds in the usual way. It is the food which he, the shade, ate. . . .

They seize the heir and widows at the pumpkin-seed ritual. The
officiant is there, she smears ashes on their chests and puts a strand of [837
ilingolongofwa creeper on their necks, then if the woman refuses the man
later there is a case and she must pay the fine for adultery. If she 681]
refuses before this there is no case, and she does not pay. The ashes and creeper are signs of death, of mourning, of the corpse—they cast them away into the river.

Question: The rubbing in earth—what does it represent?

Kasitile: The banana flower is the corpse. We are saying to him: 'You corpse, we have finished with you, do not come here again, it is finished for ever, do not look towards us, go away.' This earth is the same as the mud with which we smear ourselves at the burial. We bathe, we cast it away.

Question: The washing at the door with medicine?

Kasitile: We wash with powdered medicine at the door because we are just going to take filth (*indafu*) in our hands—to take the bananas and pumpkin-seeds. We bathe, we wash, and then they give us the bananas. It is taboo (*mwiko*) to eat before washing. The calabash used for this washing is hung up in the porch and used for the beer later, the beer which they drink on the path after anointing themselves.

Question: The bananas and lentils and pumpkin-seeds?

Kasitile: At the eating of bananas and pumpkin-seeds we do not separate them, everything is then pressed together in one place; but the banana flower we bury is separate, that is the corpse. And at the

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● 764 water when we bathe we make a separation—they take a stem of
765 bananas, and a bark-cloth, and a hen to the water. The bananas they
775 throw away—that is the corpse; the hen and the bark-cloth they bring
828 back to the homestead and the officiant takes them home with her—
that is the shade, is not the shade in the house with us? Do we not pray
to him?

Question: Putting food into the pot?

Kasitile: This food is the filth of the body. We say: 'We cast you from us, let our hearts be purified; the mud we smeared on our faces we cast it away, all our body casts you away. We are not corpses; we are putting you to rights and shaving your hair, go away to your fellows.' We begin to get rid of the earth we had on our faces so that we may anoint ourselves again. In our lineage we eat only bean mash, not bananas and millet porridge, we differ in our rituals.

Question: The sweeping of rubbish on to legs and the weeping?

Kasitile: This means: 'We begin to cast you off wholly, let all the ritual that is left come to us, we throw it away.' The measures of millet are to tell the shade that So-and-so has brought millet and is doing his ritual. 'Do not think he is angry with you,' we tell him, 'he has brought this millet.' The throwing of millet from the winnowing basket on to the participants' heads as they stand in a line outside means that we cast him away, we are taking him to the river—at the river we throw away the corpse. They throw away the leaves and the stem of bananas.

Question: Hitting the heads with a banana sapling in the doorway?

Kasitile: They hit the participants on the head, that is the *ndweka* disease of the dead man,[1] we are setting them to rights.

Question: The stem of bananas, hen, and bark-cloth?

Kasitile: The stem of bananas is the corpse, they leave it in the water with the leaves; the bark-cloth and hen are the shade which they bring into the house.

Question: The circling with the pot and putting in of food?

Kasitile: This is the shade whom they bring into the house (*bikumbeka*) when they have brought him from the water. The banana flower they bury is the same as the leaf they wear, it is the corpse which they throw away in the water.

Yes, we separate the corpse and the shade with all our might, the
earth we rub our bodies in is the corpse, we throw it into the water and
the shade we bring back to the house. The eating of the bean mash on
[177] the wall (the old custom) and on the hearth (both old and contem-
porary) that is the shade in the house. He warms himself by the fire in
the house, we pray to him. Putting food into the pot means: 'Leave our

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[1] Not clear to me.—M. W.

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bodies altogether, go away to your friends, sit here by the hearth and warm yourself.' 764 765

Question: The grinding of millet flour on to bark and the subsequent anointing of the participants with this flour in a paste, before shaving? 775 828

Kasitile: This means: 'This is your food that you ate, we give it to you.' And the smearing on the hair means: 'We have finished your ritual for you, we have left nothing out, bear us no grudge.'

Question: The sweeping of rubbish (*imindu*) on to the participants' legs?

Kasitile: The rubbish is the rubbish of death, it is dirt. 'Let it come now,' we say. 'Let it not come later, may we never run mad.' The wailing (during sweeping) means: 'Go away, farewell!' We have finished the burial now, it will never be done again save once more at the beer.

Question: The basket of millet between legs and over heads?

Kasitile: That is to drive him away, to tell him: 'Do not return to these your relatives here, you were in their bodies, now you are separate, we have driven you away, you are no relative of ours!' All that we do in the house there means that he is in our bodies and we are going to cast him out. The flour on the shoulder is like the flour paste in the hair, this is the corpse, we throw it away.

Question: The song 'We are startled by the shade' (*Tunyomwike ilindu*)?

Kasitile: The *ilindu* is the shade, we are startled.

Question: How startled?

Kasitile: Ha! Are you not startled when you run mad?[1] The heart is terribly startled, it curls upwards; when they say this phrase: 'We are startled by the *ilindu*' they quiet the heart and make it lie down again. Let him go away and be startled with his fellows!

Question: The word *ilinwanwa* (the croaking bird)?

Kasitile: That is the shade that broods on the body. 'Friend,' we say to him, 'we have put you to rights, do not come to us, oh croaking bird.'

Question: The ritual as a whole?

Kasitile: It means: 'We have given you everything, we have eaten filth on the hearth'—for if one runs mad one eats filth, faeces. . . .

Question: What is the symbolism of pouring water on the thatch and running through the drops?

Kasitile: The ritual has many parts. We teach a person that he should do it properly and not leave out anything. Do we not fear (*ukutila*) the water for washing, the water of the corpse? When heavy rain falls do we not flee from the downpour and enter the house? That is how it is then. We mimic what he did when he was alive. . . .

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[1] *Ukunyomoka ilindu* is used also for an epileptic fit.

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lentil is the shade, the millet is the shade, the pumpkin-seed is the 775
shade. The doctor takes them away home and eats them, that means 768
that the shades have gone away. The words they say: 'Ours, ours! We 833
marvel at the thing!' mean: 'The semen is ours, the shades have supported him, they have given us the semen, they have not bound it.' For if the shades are angry they bind him and the semen does not come. . . . If the heir and his dead father (or brother) were on bad terms then, although the ritual is correctly done, yet still the shades will bind his semen at the end of the ritual. Fertility (*imbapo*) does not
belong to the shades but to Kyala, but if the shade is angry he binds it. [842]

There are three symbols: the banana is the corpse and the seed is the shade. It is the filth which madmen catch hold of, it is the faeces which they eat. And the banana is the body of the man and the seed is his semen. Eating is sexual intercourse. It is this he has done during his lifetime. It is to send him away and say that we are about to put another in his homestead. It is the body and semen of him who has died. Also when a woman has died the husband eats . . . it [the banana and seed] is what we did. . . .

The seed is the shade, and it is the blood for creating a person [i.e. the semen] because the shade and the semen are brothers.[1]

Yes, they are intermingled, all are together in the ritual: the corpse, and the shade, and the body of the man [i.e. his penis] and the blood [semen] and the filth of madness; all are intermingled. You understand, Mwaipaja (G. W.), you are a priest now, you are a real priest. . . .

When they shake up the millet and lentils and pumpkin-seeds at the beer when he has finished coitus with the women it also has a double symbolism (*fyope fyo fifwani fibili*); the seed is the blood [semen]—Ours, ours—and it is the shade who has gone. Also at puberty it is like this. . . .

Those who say the *ikipiki* is one and the same for birth, puberty and the death ritual are right. It is one only. . . . The *ikipiki* is our blood, it is kept in the house of the senior wife. It pertains both to men and to the shades, for when we marry we do a ritual with it, so the shade says: 'I have eaten it during my life, I was born with it (for it went into his stomach), I married a woman with it (we wash and shave our hair with it at marriage), now that I am dead they perform the ritual with it.' It is one and the same. The *ikipiki* is our intestine.[2] It is one and the same in all lineages.

One day at a funeral roasted bananas were brought. A man 764●
started scraping the ash off his with a spear. Kasitile asked him: 'Do you scrape bananas?' He answered: 'Yes, but if there were the litter in the house we would avoid doing so.'

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[1] cf. *Ulukungu*: semen; *inyungu*: pumpkin-seed.

[2] *Ubula bwa kikolo*: 'the intestine of the lineage'; the large intestine.

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764 Then they explained to me that formerly it was forbidden to
177 scrape bananas at a death, you eat them with the ash on, for if you scrape you will scrape your body also, that is, you will scratch and scratch. But now that custom is finished. Three men were scraping away.

784 Mwaikambo said: 'In all rituals it is forbidden to scrape bananas —in the puberty and twin rituals also.'

184 KASITILE: It is forbidden to scrape bananas only at a death ritual,
784 not at other rituals. If you scrape bananas you scrape your own body. It is the corpse. We have died, we are the corpse. . . .

The mother's brother (*umwipwa*) hands bananas and meat over his
604 shoulder to the children who are treated, then he goes off home and
781 they go home without looking back at one another. If they do look
764 back at one another the child will grow feeble and go mad. If the mother's brother does not come to cut the banana grove and do this, if the child sees others eating that banana it becomes feeble and goes mad. The banana and the meat are the filth which madmen take hold of, they are filth. Yes, it is like the banana which they eat at the pumpkin-seeds ritual.

QUESTION: Why the mother's brother?

KASITILE: Who should give it to them? Their kinsman (*unkamu*) should give it to them, he who looks after everything for them.

ii. *Mwandisi's interpretation.*[1]

764 QUESTION: What do you do in the death ritual, what does it mean?

MWANDISI: When a child has died I do not approach the women, my wives, until we have finished the ritual. On the night of the day we drink the beer then we come together. It is a ritual! Yes, the coming
[833] together of man and woman is a ritual (*bo bunyago*). If we come together before the beer then we overstep our child, Lubabelo, he will be impotent and not beget children. No, his children are not relatives (*bo bandu*) they are my comrades (*bobinangu*) but if Lubabelo forestalls (*ukukinda*) the ritual with his wife then he oversteps (*ukukinda*) his children. And when we have finished the ritual Lubabelo begins[2] and goes first to his wife. We follow him at our home. If we begin we would overstep him, it is taboo (*mwiko*). At the ritual of pumpkin-seeds, we drive away the shade, we say: 'Do not rise from the dead and come to us, go to the land of the shades, that we may bear and beget another child, you prevent us doing so!'

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[1] His son Lubabelo, who was with us during the earlier part of the conversation, left so that we could speak freely. There was no difficulty about Mwandisi's wife being present.

[2] Mwandisi was referring to a ritual performed on the death of his son Lubalelo's child.

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Question: The banana and the pumpkin-seeds? 764

Mwandisi: These are the ritual which we—I the man, and she the woman—perform at the end, they are the sexual intercourse. The pumpkin-seed and the lentil and the millet are the blood of the man, the banana is his procreative power (*mbapo jake*). The pumpkin-seed ritual is important—when we have finished it then I go to my wife and do not fear her, but Lubabelo begins. Before the pumpkin-seed ritual it is completely taboo.

Question: And the beer?

Mwandisi: That is not important, but the pumpkin-seed ritual is. But when a man has died then his wife must not approach the heir until the beer ritual.

Question: Then the lust for copulation always comes from the shades? 833

Mwandisi: Yes, desire comes from the shades. If they are angry you 775 are impotent and cannot beget a child; and sometimes also you are 842 impotent because the umbilical cord (*ululela*) has fallen on your mother.

Mwandisi's Wife: When my husband says in his heart: 'I shall go to my wife', that comes from the shades.

Question: The umbilical cord?

Mwandisi's Wife: It is completely taboo for it to fall on the loins, then the child will not develop, it will be sterile and not bear (or beget) a child. And the mother herself will not bear again, she will not conceive again. . . . A woman cries a great deal with the pain in her belly until the cord comes away: when it has come away then she is filled with wonder and does not cry.[1]

Mwandisi: Pumpkin-seeds are used by us and the people of Selya; 764 the Kukwe perform the ritual with beans, and the people of Ngonde with fish and beer. . . .

Question: Why do the heir and wife appear to refuse when caught in the ritual?

Mwandisi: Because someone has died. Should they rejoice therefore? If they rejoice it seems as if they wished their relative to die.

Question: Do they fear the dead will harm them if they appear to rejoice?

Mwandisi: No, they fear those above [i.e. the living] lest they laugh at them. They are ashamed. But sometimes a woman really refuses. She fights and fights, and struggles and struggles, and says: 'No.' Her friends (the women) hit her and put her in the house, then when she has come out of the house she runs off, she flees.

Question: The ashes and the *ilingolongofwa* creeper?

Mwandisi: They are signs of mourning, they give them to the

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[1] The umbilical cord, *ululela*, is literally the 'cord of weeping'.

764 heir. It is the ritual we are performing, they are signs of widowhood (*fya bufwele*), of lamentation (*kyo kesa*). The ashes are a sign of lamentation and the *ilingolongofwa* creeper is a sign of lamentation. Yes, all these things are part of the ritual, we cannot leave them out, it is taboo. (If we did) those below [i.e. the shades] would be angry and say: 'They have startled me and caused me pain in the heart; they have injured the ritual by foreshadowing evil.'

768 At the end the heir sleeps with the women in the house—before the
764 beer. He performs the ritual with them, the officiants wait for them
and ask them: 'How was it?' If he says 'No,' they say: 'Kyala does not
[787] stand in the house.' They go and divine at a doctor's who says: 'So-and-so is angry.'

Question: Kyala does not stand in the house (*Kyala akema nnyumba*)?

Mwandisi: It is the shades, they say Kyala does not give support. Then again he performs the ritual (*ikunyagula*, i.e. he attempts to have coitus) and they ask him: 'How was it?' They say: 'Yes, they (the shades) have stood with us, Kyala has stood with us.' [He gave both forms as alternatives: *batwemile* and *Kyala emile*.] Then they clap their hands and raise the shout of triumph (*akalulu*).

Question: Is that the cry: 'Ours, ours!'?

[184 **Mwandisi**: No, that's the cry of the hill people. With us it's taboo.
784] Then in the morning someone shouts: 'War has come.' They come out
immediately and run away to the pasture-lands.

764 **Question**: Is this 'coming out' (*ukusoka*) the same as that in the coming out of chiefs (*ubusoka*) and in the twin ceremony?

Mwandisi: Yes, they run because their legs were heavy (*nsito*) in the house, now they have grown lighter and are strong; because in the twin ceremony the seclusion in the house lasts four months, at the coming out of chiefs two months, and that is hard, but at death it is only one, so it is light. But at death and the birth of twins it is the war (*ubwite*)
[833 of the mats. Is it not war with women? [*ubwite* is used here for sexual
195] intercourse.] Then when they have come out they give one another
beer to drink in the doorway. The heir takes beer in his mouth and
[753] spits it out and hands the vessel on to his wives and children. Each does
the same. They do not swallow it. To do so causes diarrhœa. The man and his wives are burning. They have come from the bed. This giving one another to drink, when each spits and does not swallow, happens after the eating of sausages of porridge on the road.[1] It is the same in the twin ritual except that whereas it is only the principals who give one another to drink at the death ritual, in the twin ritual not only they, but all relatives, and even non-relatives do it as well!

Question: How about the eating of millet porridge with powdered medicine on the road?

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[1] No other informant mentioned this in the MuNgonde death ritual.

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Mwandisi: The sausages of porridge stuck in the ground and 764 sprinkled with powdered medicine which each stoops and bites mean that you should be heavy in your belly (*musito munda*) and not have diarrhœa, it is to make faeces hard (not watery). Some we leave and bury [the end of each sausage of porridge is left in the ground]; that [753] means that people should step over it and take away the disease, may they have diarrhœa at their homes! They will get it really!

Question: Why do the dead man's sisters admonish their sisters-in- 607 law, his widows? 764

Mwandisi: Because we have all met together. They say: 'Do not grudge him food, go on cooking for him. He dies of hunger! Begin again! And why do you not cook for us when we come? You grudge us food!' We scold them very much and they weep tears.

Question: They say in Selya that you both drive away a shade and 764 bring him back to the house. 775

Mwandisi: No, we drive him away, we do not bring him back to the house.

Question: But you go to the stream with a stem of bananas, a hen and a fresh strip of bark, the bananas you throw away, but you come back with the hen and the bark. Is that the shade?

Mwandisi: These do not come back home. The officiant has them and takes them to her house. . . .

The stem of bananas we throw in the stream, it is sickness, it is the corpse, it goes to Kyala there. The hen and the bark we give to the doctor, the officiant, because it is she who caught hold of the sickness. She is always an unrelated person, not a relative; we pay her. If we have not performed the ritual we run mad, the shades have not come out, they are still there within.

Question: You performed the ritual for Lubabolo's child yourselves? 764

Mwandisi: Yes, she was our grandchild. We grandparents don't matter, we carry out the ritual but it's not important; if, however, it is [603] our own child [who has died] then it is taboo. It is taboo up to the point that connections are not relatives. [A grandchild in this context—though not in other contexts—is treated as not a relative]. The ritual *must* be performed for all *relatives* (*abakamu*). . . .

First the stem of bananas and then the millet and pumpkin-seeds are passed between the straddled legs of the principals. The winnowing basket (containing millet and seeds) is pushed along with the officiant's elbow. In performing this ritual we finish the mating of man and woman, for that which comes out of the man in front [i.e. the semen] is the shades, when the participants have spat out we drive the shades away. If we have not performed the ritual we go mad. The shades have not come out but are still within. When, however, we have finished, then they have come out of the body. But they come again, we always have them. (*Apa tukunyagula tukumalesya mboleli nunyambala nunkikulu, po*

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764 *ifi fikusoka kukyeni nunyambala bo basyuka, bo baputile abasyuka tukubakaga:
lenga tukanyagwila tukubopa ikigili! Abasyuka bo bakasokaga bikujamo; papo
lenga tumalile po basokile munda. Loli bikwandesya kangi tukuja nabo bwila!)*

842 What we do comes from the shades and from Kyala himself. The
831 blood is theirs and his together. Those who create (*ukubumba*) a child
say: 'I am just eating at a woman,' but Kyala creates a child! If Kyala
and the shades do not 'cook' [i.e. do not cause desire] you will do
nothing, the penis is flaccid, but if Kyala has 'cooked' then you really
do something, your heart (*indumbula*) is full of desire. Always the shades
are there and we drive them away, they are there and we drive them
away. . . .

775 A shade is resurrected in the body of his child (*Unsyuka ikusyuka itolo mumbeli gwa mwanake*). . . .

764 Passing the basket of pumpkin-seeds, millet, and lentils between the
775 legs and on to the head and throwing to one side means: 'Here between
the legs there is work, may they go out in intercourse, and from the
head where we dream, may they go out also.' Because in the ritual we
say: 'Let them come into the body' at first, then we drive them away.
Rubbing ourselves in the earth and passing millet between the legs
means: 'May they come';[1] throwing millet and so on to one side it is to
drive them away, that they may go out.

QUESTION: Which shade do you drive away?

MWANDISI: He who has just died, we drive him away.

QUESTION: What about the first ancestor?

MWANDISI: He is there at their place [the place of the shades], we drove him away long ago, he just receives him [the newly deceased].

QUESTION: Why the pumpkin-seeds in the bananas?

MWANDISI: It is the semen (*ulukungu*) for begetting children. . . .

QUESTION: Do the shades always come when a man dies?

MWANDISI: Yes, they always come, they receive their fellow. Yes,
even though he has died from sorcery they come and receive him, and
even though he has died from witchcraft they come, the shades receive
him, and if it is from illness he has died they also come. There is no
[761] death without the shades, they always come to receive their fellow.

When the witches have 'eaten' someone the shades come to receive
764 him. No, the witches eat him alone, but the shades receive him. Some-
775 one may get up in the morning and say: 'I dreamed they ate me and I
763 was with the shades!' Then he is about to die. Sometimes someone
828 dreams and says: 'In the night I was in the land of the shades with
so-and-so, I left him there, I escaped myself and came home.' Then his
friend is about to die.

764 If you do not perform the ritual you go mad (*kukyembela ikigili*) or
775 perhaps you get very thin, and are unable to die, you are ailing and do

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[1] i.e. the participants identify themselves with the deceased.

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not die. That comes from the shades when they are angry and say: 'We shall see!' It is to be finished off.

QUESTION: So the shades always come at death?

MWANDISI: Yes. See, Mwafyuma who died [the old Mwafyuma, a classificatory brother of Mwandisi, died the day before yesterday]. I dreamed at night of Mwakalukwa [a classificatory son of Mwandisi who died about 1932] and in the morning I told X here [his son-in-law who lives near was sitting with us and at once assented, 'Yes, he told me'] that I had dreamed of Mwakalukwa, and there were many deaths in the country—the people of Kisale were mourning and the peopleof Ndemba and that Mwakalukwa had said to me: 'Where are we dead to care for those who come?' And I said to X: 'If someone comes from Mwaya you will see that someone has died.' That very day my son here [Pugana his son was sitting near] came and said: 'Mwafyuma has died.' 764 775 828

This dream of Mwandisi's was cited as a proof that the shades come to receive a man at death. They came to Mwandisi in a dream—the shade of Mwakalukwa came, which he took to mean that the death was to be in Mwakalukwa's country, not Mwakalinga's.

QUESTION: You said the shades come to receive a man killed by witches. Have they no power to drive away witches? 764 775

MWANDISI: No, the shades have not the power to drive away the witches but Kyala drives them away. 754

QUESTION: Kyala? You mean the headman of the village!

MWANDISI: Yes, the headman drives them off, Kyala gave him the power (or duty).

iii. *Evidence of other informants*

KISSOULE: We begin by burying the flowering head of an *ilitoki* banana—that is a person—then we rub forehead, elbow, and knee in the earth there and go to bathe. We push away the earth, that means our business above here (in the world of the living) is finished, we have really buried you, do not come here above, go to your place (below), in the world of the shades. 764

MWAILAPE (a Christian): They throw the stem of bananas into the water and the bark and feathers, but if it is a fowl and the bark is good, they take them back and they belong to the officiant. Throwing away the stem of bananas means: 'We are driving you (the shade) away. Be off!' The millet which is tossed in the faces of the participants is also thrown away in the water. Tossing it in their faces means: 'This is your food which you cultivated, go away with it.'

MWAKISISILE AND OTHERS: The touching of the ground is the ex-

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764 pression of the wish that he will not come into our dreams and thoughts any more, and he does not.

Question: Why the medicine?

Mwakisisile: It is a ritual, a custom. The medicine and the touching of the ground are the same thing, they wish to stop him coming into our dreams.

Question: Why do you eat bananas?

Mwakisisile: We eat the main food of the country.

Question: Why the fighting for the porridge?

Mwakisisile: This is still to wish him good-bye, it is the end of the ritual. We must finish or he, the dead man, will not go away, half of him will still be there.

Question: Why the beer?

Mwakisisile: Beer is the drink of the country just as bananas are the food. The drinking is to finish saying good-bye. When we have eaten and drunk then we have done with him altogether. Before this he comes time after time into our dreams. If you do not perform the ritual some people say that when you get sick you will never die, but always be sick. If you are sick they will remember and say: 'Let us make beer for ritual.' That is why all must bring some millet to the ritual to ensure a quiet and easy death. Eating and drinking like this is the custom. Something bad will happen to the lineage if it is not done. To refuse to participate is to separate from your lineage.

Mpogo: At the ritual there should be many foods. The bean is there and we eat it; the lentil is there and we eat it; millet is there and the
764 banana and pumpkin-seed. That means: 'You shade, do not think that
775 there was little food at your ritual; the food which we have eaten with you, you have eaten.' Yes, the shade himself eats. We sprinkle on the earth (*pasi*)[1] whither you (the shade) have gone, meaning: 'Do not create hunger, bless the children that they may eat food and not just wander about.' If we do not perform the ritual properly the children will get thin, the shade says: 'You have not unloosed me, I am just on the road.' There should be many foods which means that we have given you (the shade) all the food which we men eat. The banana in which we put seeds is the corpse. The shades eat food, we dream that we eat with them, and if they are angry the beer in the house goes bad, and the milk goes bad.

764 Angombwike (the Christian son of a famous doctor) agreed, in answer to questions, that 'the eating of filth by madmen is like the filth of death, those faeces are the corpse'.

764 Mwandisi's Friend (a man of 35 or 40): We perform the ritual that
775 Kyala may receive him, that the shades may receive him, because the

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[1] *Pasi*: *below* and implies both *on* the ground and *underground*.

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ritual is powerful. If you do not perform the ritual for your father or 764
perhaps that of your wife then you won't be a person, your body 775
comes to an end and you die, but you are present, you are still alive,
you do not die when the body comes to an end, you take faeces as in
the ritual. But when they bring millet and say: 'This is so-and-so's, and
this so-and-so's' (naming him whose ritual you have omitted) and
brew beer and drink it, then you die.

Question: How do the dead appear to us?

Answer: They appear before our eyes at night. You dream and in the morning say: 'I was with the so-and-so's in the night, with the so-and-so's!

Question: Where do you go (at death)?

Answer: When we die we go above. [177]

Question: That's a new thing?

Answer: Yes, indeed, formerly we said we went below; our fathers and grandfathers said that. But we now say we go below to rot and stink only but since we look toward home when they bury us perhaps the heart (*indumbula*) goes above (*kumwanya*) and that is home. We have seen this in European times in books. No, I am not a Christian and I cannot read, I've just learnt this. . . .

Kalunda (a doctor) and Mwaijumba: The *ikipiki* medicine put into
the beer and lees at 'the shaving of the sprouting hair' is the same
medicine as that which we eat at the pumpkin-seed ritual. The *ikipiki*
of the death ritual and the puberty ritual and the birth ritual is one
and the same, but the medicine for twins is different. . . . There is one
ikipiki used in all the three rituals—puberty, birth, and death—but to
it is added another medicine which is different for each of the three.
Ikipiki is our kinship, it is our blood (*ikipiki bo bukamu bwetu, lyo ilopa*
lyetu); when my wife has borne a child and no one wipes its mouth with [851]
the *ikipiki* it means it is not my child, it is just a bastard from the
veld, it is no relative of mine but a stranger. In the puberty ritual it is [881]
the same, we treat the girl with the *ikipiki* of her husband. She moves
from our lineage, from that of her father, she is now a stranger, not
their relative (*ikusama nkikolo kyetu, kubagwise, mundu leleno, aka nkamu*
gwabo). When someone has died it is the same. We eat food together
with the deceased, the shade, and his blood. It is like the Swahili custom
of eating each other's blood to create kinship. It means: 'You were our [171]
kinsman from afore-time, but now it is finished, you are a stranger.'
But the medicine for the twin ritual is separate, it is quite different.

2. IN KUKWE COUNTRY

The Kukwe ritual of death differs in detail from that of Selya 764
and MuNgonde, but it is performed with the same overt purpose: 184
to drive away the dead from the bodies and dreams of the

764 mourners, to prevent him 'brooding' over them, lest they run mad
184 or become feeble in mind and body; to speed him on his road to the land of the shades and bring him back as a beneficent spirit in the house. The power of the shades over potency and fertility is acknowledged and the widow goes to her father's house with the 'filth' of intercourse with the heir on her and there drinks beer ritually, lest her relatives die of a gasping cough. In short, the themes which characterize the Selya ritual occur also in the Kukwe ritual.

Many of the symbols employed in the Selya ritual are employed by the Kukwe also: the elaborate washing with medicine and shaving and anointing to separate the mourners from the corpse, the casting away of leaves they wear in the stream, the sweeping out of the litter in the mourning hut, the miming of the action of a madman in eating faeces as a prophylactic against becoming mad, the use of the *ikipiki*—the medicine representing kinship—all these are common to both rituals. But each has distinctive symbols also.

(a) *The events*

764 The ritual begins in the evening, four or five days after the death. The participants wash with *nyasati* medicine in the doorway of the mourning hut, and lick lumps of porridge off the mid-rib of a banana leaf. The porridge is prepared by the officiant who grinds the millet at the doorway and then puts the mixture on two banana leaves, one of plantain (*itoki*), the other of sweet banana (*indifu* or *iselya*), which are used throughout as male and female symbols respectively. After sunset, a pot with medicine in it is put on the fire, and each participant in turn throws in a few beans mixed with medicine, and then some water, saying as he or she does so: 'This is the ritual of my mother' (or father, etc., as the case may be). A stem of plantains is 'stolen' from a friend's banana plantation (he having agreed beforehand that it should be taken), then the participants gather round the hearth and bid farewell to the deceased. They circle round the hearth to the music of a harp and sing. As they circle, the participants crumble pods of oil-seed (*inyemba*). Sometimes they also sing: 'It's the twisting up,' and twist up cloths as they do so. Then they dance the stamping dance, (*ukukanya nganya*,) and raise the cry of triumph (*akalulu*). When daylight comes they eat the beans which have stood overnight in the hut and sweep out the rubbish (*imindu*) with a medicine (*imitwati*) and throw it in the banana grove. This is 'clearing out the litter'

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(*ukusosya ulufumbo*). Rich people kill a cow 'to clear cut the litter' 764
which, like those killed at the burial, is said to go with the deceased [556]
to the land of the shades.

Some time later (the date varies from one ritual to another) they 764
build a little hut at the intersection of two paths—cross-roads—or, 346
if there is no cross-roads near, on the path to the stream, and in
this hut they make a hearth with fire-bricks (*amafiga*); a fire is
lighted and each participant in turn puts oil-seeds from the
unsyunguti tree into a potsherd on the fire, saying as he does so:
'This is the death of my mother (etc.).' The seeds are mixed with 764
medicine and, when they are roasted, are ground for ointment.
Then beans are put on with water in the same fashion, each participant
pouring a little water and saying: 'This is the ritual of my
mother (etc.).' Next, the participants are made to sit down on a
bark-cloth. The officiant draws lines on the head of each with a
bunch of *ikisajelo* grass dipped in the lees of beer, and as she shaves
him she mocks him saying: 'Poor fool, it found its mother was
dead, went stealing, and they have speared it on the head.' Then
the participants go to wash, each wearing two banana leaves
round his loins and two round his neck. One of each pair is a
plantain, and it is put on first, the other is a sweet banana and it
comes on top. And each participant sticks a plantain into his (or
her) waistband in front, and a sweet banana behind. When they [783]
come to the stream each participant sits down in it and the
officiant puts pebbles between his fingers and toes, in the crooks of
his elbows and knees, in his mouth and ears, and on his head.
These, and the leaves and bananas he wore, are allowed to flow
away in the water. They return to the temporary hut carrying
flowers, *kalengelenge* and *kakesefu*, which they throw on to the roof,
and the officiant pours water she has brought in a little calabash
on to the thatch above the doorway, while each participant in
turn runs through the drops, out at a back door, in again and out
through the drops. As they come home millet is scattered on the
ground before them, then they eat roasted bananas with lentils
(and sometimes pumpkin-seeds) stuck in them as in the Selya
ritual, boiled bananas and beans, a bean mash, and roasted
chicken or, sometimes, meat. The bananas are from the plantain
stem they stole and from a sweet banana stem provided by the
family, and some of the food is salted, some unsalted. As they eat
they look in the direction from which their lineage came, then the
officiant anoints them with ointment (made from the oil-seeds

764 prepared earlier) and ties a strip of medicated banana bark round the neck of each, and with these necklaces on they must sleep. In one lineage they take little horns and blow into them and walk round calling out: 'We are driving you away, you are a stranger to us, do not come in dreams repeatedly.'

Next morning sausages of millet porridge mixed with medicine are half-buried in the earth at the cross-roads—or somewhere on the pathway—and each participant in turn bends down and bites off a piece, leaving some in the ground. They take off their bark necklaces and throw them into the little hut, which is then destroyed. After they have bathed again the officiant strokes each one on the forehead with a razor.

768 587 When a married man has died the heir is formally recognized, and the widows are asked whether they accept him as their husband, at some point during the ritual; when Mwaikambo's father died the recognition of the heir preceded the whole ritual; more often it follows it and there is a formal drinking of 'the beer of inheritance'. In any case the first intercourse between the heir and the widows is always delayed for some months and, until it has taken place, the widows may meet their relatives; after it each widow returns to the homestead of her father (or his heir) for the 'ritual of the gasping cough' (*ingotolo*). Old Fibombe, a Christian elder, described it vividly:

> 768 177 587 The parents of the girl brew beer and call her to the beer of *ingotolo*. They also call their relatives. She brings a hoe or a goat (or now a cloth or 1s.). First of all she lifts up the pot of beer into which an officiant has put powdered medicine (*imbondanya*) and takes a mouthful, stirring the rest, then she hands it to another participant and when he has taken a mouthful she spits out, then she stirs and hands it on, and when the next has taken a mouthful she spits, and so it continues until all present have done this. Nowadays people do not take the beer in their mouths, they simply stir and pass it on. Pride prevents them. They say people will laugh at them if they do the things of old. Time is passing and things are like *Mambo Leo* [the Swahili newspaper] now. All [184] pagans, however, still do this ritual in a modified form, only the Christians leave it undone.

768 587 This informant omitted two significant points in the ritual which we saw for ourselves: the widow brings a spear belonging to her new husband and thrusts it into the earth outside her father's house. It stands beside the vessel of beer while her kinsmen drink until her brother plucks it out and takes it into the

158 757 kind. We take such a one [either type] to a doctor, tying a rope round his waist on the way. For if we leave him free he goes and drowns himself in the lake. So then the doctor says 'His heart has suddenly turned over', and gives him a powdered medicine to eat from a bark-cloth. Then when he has eaten the medicine the doctor puts a finger at the back of his tongue to make him vomit, again and again. So then the filth comes out of him. Then the doctor says: 'Don't eat meat or fish until I give you other medicine later.' Then he ties some of the same medicine in two bark-cloths and ties one round his neck, one round his loins. . . .

158 684 Sometimes a man in the mad fit finds a woman, then he takes the leaves off his waist, catches hold of her and, forcing her to the ground, has intercourse with her. Then when the woman returns home she complains that a man in the mad fit has caught and raped her. Then her husband says: 'Well, it's all over now. If he'd been in normal health I'd have sued him for a cow for adultery before the chief, but seeing he is mad there's no point in my doing so, it's all over now!' . . .

158 775 Sometimes madness comes by itself, although no ritual has been omitted, sometimes because they have not performed a ritual. The symptoms of the two kinds are exactly the same, their cause is different. The one connected with ritual comes because the shades are angry: 'Why have you left that child untreated, without putting stones on its head . . . ? It seems it is of no account.' And then the child goes mad.

757 755 When madness comes of itself the doctor takes the patient to a waterfall and lets the water tumble on his head; then he makes him vomit, and the vomit is carried away in the water. But that which comes from ritual they don't treat in this way; they make him vomit at home, and then perform the ritual for him.

158 787 Sometimes madness brings visions (*injasi*)—the man lets everything come in his speech and says of people: 'What sort are they? They are witches!' And if there is a gathering he speaks out: 'You are a witch—you bewitch your neighbour's cows!' So then people ask what he means by letting everything come in his speech like this, and they are told he has the mad fit on him. The madness gives him power to see the witches, he sees them surely. And of old if a madman with the fit on him accused you of witchcraft you would go at once to drink the ordeal. [683] And if the ordeal accused you too then your house was burnt over you!

●764 QUESTION: Why the washing and eating porridge?

MWASALEMBA: If we don't do this then the children will vomit a watery fluid.

I put a direct question to him about the sausages of porridge and he admitted with a smile, rather an embarrassed one: 'Yes, well, you have understood it; yes, it is a symbol of eating excrement . . . we do it at night.'

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Question: The water dripping from the little hut?

Mwasalemba: If we omit this then the children when young don't o mad, but they vomit a watery fluid, and people say that we have ot performed the ritual of water for them.

Question: The meaning of leaves and fruit of bananas?

Mwasalemba: Yes, it is because those who run mad throw away eir clothes and wear leaves. So in the ritual we make them wear aves; we think that if we don't do this they will have the madness and rrow away their clothes. The leaves of plantain belong to the man he father), those of sweet banana to the woman (the mother). They gnify the completion of the ritual, both of their father and of their other. We make them wear both kinds of leaf, even if one parent is ill alive, because they begot them together, their blood is one, the an's blood and the woman's blood. The plantain fruit which they sert in the leaves in front is the procreative power of the father, it is ke his penis; the sweet banana which they insert behind is the fertility of the mother, it is like a bark-cloth. We throw them away in the ater so that they may float away, it is a sign of death; the blood of ur parents which was one is finished now!

Question: The leaves on the neck?

Mwasalemba: When they run mad people do this, they wear leaves n head and neck.

Question: The stones on the head, in ears, mouth and fingers?

Mwasalemba: That is a symbol of death. Does not the corpse esemble a stone? It neither speaks nor hears; it does not hoe, or work vith its hands at all. He whom we have buried is like a stone. We hrow his death away into the stream.

Question: The little hut?

Mwasalemba: That is for cooking food in; we don't cook for him [the dead man] in the house because we did not bury him there but outside, so we cook for him outside. . . . We grind millet in the doorway [778] because the doorway belongs to the shade. We say: 'Receive us, oh shade, since a person has died, receive us!' Because if we enter into the house we are with the shade, and when we come out we are with him, the doorway is the shade's (*ikifigo kya unsyuka*). It is like the pouring of water on the thatch; when we have come from bathing, we enter and come out again, the doorway is the shade's. And at other times, if someone is ill and the shade has been brooding over him, he stands in the doorway and prays to the shade (*ikumpala unsyuka*). Yes, when a man dies the shade broods over (*ikutabatila*) us living.

[761]

Question: Does death come from the shades?

763

Mwasalemba: Yes, when I have lain down at night, in the morning I tell my children: 'So-and-so and so-and-so came to me, I have eaten their food, they came to carry me off.' Then there is sickness and they say: 'The shades have brooded over you, you will die.' It is death in-

763 deed. We wash at the eating of millet to say: 'You shade, this millet which we eat comes to you because you brooded over us.' We wash our hands and mouths.

764 Question: Why do you eat millet?

775 Mwasalemba: The millet belongs to the shade. When we brew beer we put some in a calabash cup, but it is not drunk, it is left for five days and becomes lees [i.e. the liquid dries up], then we say: 'The shade has drunk it.'[1] We pray to him and say: 'He is angry.' We brew beer and pour it out in the banana grove, and say: 'You shade, what are you angry about, why have you brooded over the beer?' (They go first to divine.) We speak in the evening in the banana grove and all the children listen, and my wife in the house.

Similarly, if a cow calves and then does not take to its calf, does not lick it, then doctors say: 'The shades have caught hold of the cow, they have brooded over it. Then I pray with water only [in the other case there is both blowing out water and pouring of beer], and I speak as before. Then in the evening the cow takes to its calf and we say: 'The shades refused to let it recognize its calf.' That beer stays for two days —it's not strong!

764 Question: The licking porridge off the mid-rib of the banana leaf?

Mwasalemba: We eat porridge and he [the shade] eats. We eat off the mid-rib of the banana leaf because the banana grove is the shade's. When someone has died we cut the banana grove, and in the banana grove we pray. It is the shade's own.

764 Question: Throwing beans into the pot?

775 Mwasalemba: We say: 'You shade! We are eating these beans. Since you have brooded over our fellow who has died, receive him.' For we do not pray to him who has died now, but to that first one who died first. If we do not give him beans then the beans dry up, they shrivel in the fields and people say: 'The shade is angry. We have made a mistake in not giving him beans, we have not taken care of our fellow, his child.' Because the shade creates the beans. Yes, he, the shade, creates all foods, millet and maize and all.

764 Question: The stealing of bananas?

Mwasalemba: The millet and beans used are those of the house, but the stem of bananas must come from the house of a friend because bananas belong to the shade. Do you pray to him in the hoed fields? In the millet? You pray to him in the banana grove! Because of this you seek another's banana stem!

764 Question: Circling round the fire to the harp and singing?

775 Mwasalemba: The first shade who has died we have within us, he has brooded over us, we make him circle round, we are with him.

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[1] At the drinking of the beer of inheritance in the Ndali ritual the shades are called upon. 'If the beer froths up that means the shades have heard', and the calabash cup is dashed to pieces on the hearth.

Question: Where is the one who has just died? 764

775 **Mwasalemba**: It is him the shade has brooded over. We say: 'You shade, look after this child of yours, care for him and don't abandon him. He also should be a shade, let the others speak to him in the future.' When we sing 'Farewell . . .' we lament him who has died.

Question: And the trampling dance (*ukukanya inganya*)?

Mwasalemba: We say: 'You shade, care for your fellow, don't desert him, may he be with you in your body.' We trample the ground because the shade is in the ground, he is within the body, he is underground, everywhere.

Question: What do you mean by 'in your body'?

Mwasalemba: Because the shade has created us, we came from him, we die, we go there to him; not to others, but to him.

Question: The two leaves and beating and saying: '*Syeku, syeku* of father, *syeku, syeku* of mother'?

Mwasalemba: Syeku is the name we have been given for the shade. We say: 'The shade, the shade of father, the shade, the shade of mother!' because since a woman has died we speak to the shade as if the husband was 'father' (*tata*) who brooded over his wife. He has brooded over all us living, both me and my wife. That is what these leaves are [i.e. the husband and wife]. We speak to that man who was first buried, saying: 'Perhaps you are within, perhaps you are beneath, oh shade!' We speak to that first man who was the first to die.

Sweeping the house is that it may be clean (*muwelu*). Before that it is [783] dirty. . . .

The shade brooded both over the dead and over me, the living; he brooded over the dead who is with him and over me who am alive; I am in him—we all are. . . .

Question: Why the water on the roof? 764

753 **Mwasalemba**: If we neglect this then a child will go mad, he runs off to the water and the water comes into his nose [i.e. he drowns] because we have not given him water in the doorway of the little hut there. If we neglect something then the child goes mad and runs off and catches hold of faeces, he smears faeces on his body and urinates into his hands and washes with the urine.

Question: Why does the shade want him to do these filthy things? 764

775 **Mwasamelma**: Because if we do not perform the ritual for him and do not care for him we do not remember him, then he says: 'Since you do not remember me this child will also get dirty, because I have got dirty underground, I am dead. See, you buried me! The earth has entered my mouth and eyes, why do you not care for me?'

Question: But even if you do treat him ritually, still the earth is in his mouth! How is he satisfied?

Mwasalemba: Because this shadow (*isyungulu*) [pointing in explanation to the shadows of the banana trees] is what we care for, it is the

775 764 shade (*jonsyuka*)! That (which was buried) is just earth, the body has rotted, it is the shade that we care for.

Question: And the necklace of banana bark?

764 Mwasalemba: We sleep with them. In the morning we bathe again and throw them in the water. . . . Yes, indeed, some throw them away in the little hut. It is the shade, we perform the ritual and throw him away. . . . If we do not perform the ritual we do not sleep, then we pray in the banana grove and are startled.

Question: Why the banana bark?

Mwasalemba: It is with the banana that we perform the ritual: the plantain is what we steal and the sweet banana what we cut at home, and in the banana grove we pray.

When a man dies his wives sit in a row on a bark-cloth. It's at the shaving of the hair, the doctor shaves them on the bark-cloth. It's a new one because we say: 'You must throw away the bark-cloths which your husband who has died caught hold of, and wear other cloths.' So they sit on a new one.

Question: What do they do with it?

Mwasalemba: They throw it away on the litter.

Question: Where?

Mwasalemba: In the little hut. It means: 'Here we have mourned; let us throw away everything, let us wear others.' If a woman has died we men do not sit on the bark-cloth, but if I have died then my wife sits on the bark-cloth and throws away her old ones, and also when a son has died the mother throws away her old bark-cloths, but she does not sit on the bark-cloth! No! And she does not throw away her bark-cloth for the death of a small son, nor for a daughter, even though she be grown up. No! See, she is also a woman and wears a bark-cloth in front. But for a grown son a mother throws away her bark-cloths, saying: 'Because he was my child, I bore him, he sucked my breasts, so I throw away the bark-cloths.' Only for a grown son who has wives in his house does the mother throw away her bark-cloth, not for a bachelor.

764 Question: The stones between the fingers?

775 Mwasalemba: We throw him away. It is the shade.

Question: Is the first intercourse after a death a ritual or not?

764 Mwasalemba: No, it is not a ritual; we begin to have intercourse
768 when the ritual is finished. But among the Penja when someone has
171 died and the ritual has been performed and is finished, the husband takes a cow and gives it to the father of his wife, saying: 'I take the woman.' Then he has intercourse with her. But we do not, except in the case of twins.

833 Question: And ordinary intercourse?

775 Mwasalemba: The shade is together with the heart (*alinajo indumbula*); it is he who is roused and goes to a woman, it is he who stiffens

us in front, we men, and the woman is also roused. If you have not the 833
shade in you (*ukanajo unsyuka*)[1], then you are sterile, you are impotent, 775
you do not copulate with women; we say that the shades have brooded over you. Why do they not rouse him to go to women? He just looks at them. Because the shade rouses within a man and says: 'Ha!' It rouses a man to copulate with a woman. If it has brooded on him then it does not rouse him; it is within him, it does not wish to come out.

Question: Why do you let the hair grow in the death ritual?

Mwasalemba: The hair is very important, it's very important. 764

Mwasalemba identified growing hair after spearing a man, and after the birth of twins and later shaving, with growing hair and shaving in the death ritual.

Question: So letting the hair grow at an ordinary death is part of the ritual?

Mwasalemba: It [the hair] is the corpse's. We have not yet driven him away. At the shaving we drive him off.

Syungu (wife of Mwasalemba) told me that stones were placed 764
between the toes, not only of the participants in the death ritual, 775
but also of a bride (*unsungu*)[2] and that the stones are children (*amabwe bo bana*). The girl should bear six or ten children to her husband.

'But', I said, 'at the death ritual you throw away the corpse, the shade.'

Syungu answered: 'Yes, it is so, children are born by the power [842]
of the shades (*mmaka ga basyuka*).'

Mwasalemba himself, when asked about this, said: 'The stones are the shade, we throw him away so that when he has gone the girl may bear children.'

Syungu: When a girl does not bear children we say: 'Perhaps 842
the shades are angry, the husband has not finished giving marriage- 775
cattle.'

Question: And madness?

Syungu: If she goes mad we say, if we have not treated her: 'We 158
have neglected the ritual, we have not treated her!' The girl runs about 755
aimlessly, she smears herself with filth. But when we have treated her and she goes mad then we say: 'Perhaps Kyala has deserted me, see nothing remains, we have treated her.'

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[1] He used both the phrases *ukusita kuja nunsyuka* (to be without the shade) and *unsyuka ikummobatela* (the shade broods on him) for the same phenomenon.

[2] *Unsungu*: a girl who has reached puberty but has not yet borne a child; one undergoing the puberty-marriage ritual (*ubusungu*).

● 764 773 QUESTION: What are the stones in the clefts of hands and toes?

MWASALEMBA: Kyala when he created men said: 'At the death ritual do this, it is the shade, it is the body.'

775 Mwasalemba went on to discuss the puberty ritual and attributed sexual desire and diarrhœa to the shades. He explained that faeces (which are buried) 'go below to the land of the shades' (*vide* p. 127; 210 ff.).

764 [158] SYUNGU: If we leave out something a child runs off to Mwibonde [wild pasture-land] and catches hold of that which is bad and pants with madness (*ikigili*). Some go to Mwibonde and gather faggots and put them on their heads then throw them away again.

QUESTION: How is it that people ever omit a ritual?

SYUNGU: Some omit some of it. They make mistakes out of ignorance.

QUESTION: But do any omit it altogether?

[184] SYUNGU: No, only the Christians. No pagan neglects it altogether.

QUESTION: But those who have run away and are not there (e.g. women who have eloped with lovers)?

SYUNGU: Yes, indeed, it is they who neglect it, but those who are at home perform the ritual.

QUESTION: How about stealing the banana bunch?

SYUNGU: Yes, we steal it, but we tell the owner beforehand, and when we eat the mash we mix the stolen with the home-grown, that which is stolen is always a plantain and that from home is a sweet banana. The plantain is the man's and the sweet banana the woman's. And when we bathe we wear a plantain leaf, which has been stolen, in front, and a sweet banana leaf, which comes from home, behind.

MWASALEMBA:[1] The girl brought the spear of her husband and stuck it in the ground. At the end Losi (my eldest son and her full brother) pulled it up and it will always be on my wall. The spear is an essential part of the ritual; without it the ritual would go wrong. If she came with no spear we should send her back again to fetch one.

764 587 We drink the medicine because, when our son-in-law has died and our daughter lies with another who has not been our son-in-law before, if she comes and gives us food with the filth (*indafu*) on her then we gasp and cough with *ingotolo*. It is quite different if she runs away from her husband when he is alive. Then we drink no medicine. Yes, then she comes, with *indafu* on her, and gives us food and nothing happens. [828] I don't know why. Kyala made us black people like this. It is when her husband dies that we drink. We drink as soon as she lies with her new husband, not after she becomes pregnant. If we see that she is pregnant before she comes we are angry. She should come first to the ritual and then conceive. She does not wait until her periods stop before coming

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[1] Referring to the *ingotolo* ritual for his daughter described on p. 66.

KuKwe

for the ritual. We think that when she has slept with her new husband 764
she is full (*nsito*) and if she gives us food it will make us ill. 587

Mwangwanda: The new husband gives us relatives a disease by impregnating the girl, he who is no relative of ours, the new husband. [753] *Ingotolo* is an illness.

ii. *Kakune's interpretation.* (Recorded by G. W.)

Kakune: Yes, if we do not perform the ritual the children run mad. 764 They speak foolishly and deliriously, they run about wildly wearing [158] leaves, they eat filth. But they do not fight with their fellows—that is what those do who have the madness of Kyala. It is these of whom we say: 'Perhaps Kyala loved them.'

Question: Why the first washing?

Kakune: That is to get rid of the disease, the filth, for they held the corpse in their hands. They do not eat the ritual food until they have washed.

Question: Why the eating of porridge?

Kakune: Because of the tears we have wept. We have mourned him; now let us eat and strengthen our bodies again.

Question: Why are beans thrown into the pot in the evening?

Kakune: These beans, which we throw into the pot, saying: 'This is my father's death', are an ending of the ritual. They remain all night in the house after they have been cooked, and the shades come and eat. In the morning the doctor [*unganga*, i.e. the officiant] washes us again with powdered medicine and we eat the beans and finish them. We use beans in the ritual for that is the food which our father hoed. We think: 'Our father has died, he will never hoe for us again', and so we say: 'This is the death of my father.' So then the shade of our father comes at night and tastes the food and says to us: 'I, your father, have died, you have mourned for me; live you yet awhile, do not come quickly to death; and may you hoe plenty of food and have no hunger.' If we leave out this ritual with the beans the fertility of our gardens [789] disappears and we have great hunger, we eat nothing.

Question: Why the circling to the harp and crumbling oil-seeds?

Kakune: The ointment (made from the oil-seeds) is to finish the ritual. The song (*ukalende*) is to say good-bye, to the shade, it means 'farewell', it is to drive him away. We circle round because our father was an active man, he walked round seeing his friends, he danced; that is why we circle round the fire. [In Kakune's family they do not [84] cry the war shout of triumph, they only dance to the harp.]

Question: Why the pebbles? [I told him what Mwasalemba had said and he agreed heartily.]

Kakune: Yes, that's it! We throw them away, this means 'We have driven you away now.'

764 QUESTION: Why the leaves and bananas?

KAKUNE: If you do not wear these and throw them away your own children [i.e. children of the participant] will die soon after birth; you beget a daughter and she dies, a son and he dies, then people say: 'See, you did not perform the ritual.' . . .

QUESTION: What is the meaning of the death ritual?

KAKUNE: Because the deceased has died on us (*atufwelile mumbeli*), if we do not treat him, he looks on us, we are together with him, he does not move away at all, so then, we drive him off.

He then described the acts of the ritual in great detail exactly checking what Mwaikambo and I saw when Kalata's mother died (cf. pp. 238–44) except that he did not mention grinding ointment [184] at the circling round. I asked about this and he thought it was not done in his lineage but was not sure.

QUESTION: The stones between the toes?

KAKUNE: It is to make a separation, it is our separation, we are driving him off; we go into the water with pebbles and throw them away, they are the deceased, we drive him off.

QUESTION: And what about running through the house letting the water drip on you after bathing?

KAKUNE: Yes, indeed, we come from the stream carrying water which we have drawn, and flowers in our hands, and we throw the flowers on the thatch.

QUESTION: What does it mean?

764 775 KAKUNE: It is because we have come from the stream, we have driven him away in the stream, but we bring back water we have drawn and flowers—they are the deceased. It means we are with him for he has not moved (*akasama*); let us drive him out again. We throw away the flowers on the thatch and we pour water on the thatch and it trickles down on the body. It is he [the deceased] whom we receive. If we drive him away altogether at the water what will he say to us?

QUESTION: You receive him and drive him off again?

KAKUNE: We drive him off so that his whole body should not be [828] seen, because we fear to see the dead . . . and at the same time we do *not* drive him away, he will come in dreams to tell us of misdeeds (*ukutubula inongwa*).

When we receive him we drive him away again at the anointing with ointment. The doctor anoints us on the toe, knee, elbow, stomach, and forehead, and says: 'I have finished them, anoint yourselves.' Then we anoint ourselves and say: 'You have moved to another village.' But at the same time we do not throw him away altogether, we pray to him and say: 'You, Father, stand by me.' We bring him back when we have bathed. He also bathed there, he is present![1] 764 775

QUESTION: The meaning of the shaving?

KAKUNE: The doctor takes a bunch of *ikisajelo* grass and a little millet beer and then makes two cross lines in the hair before shaving, and he shaves us.

QUESTION: Why?

KAKUNE: It is the ritual, we drive him off.

Being unable to get any more I then suggested that the *ikisajelo* and beer represented the shade and that they took him on to their bodies in order to throw him off.

Kakune: 'Yes, that's it, you are very intelligent for you understand it! That's it!'

QUESTION: And is the *ikisajelo* grass the shade's which the seers uproot? [824]

KAKUNE: Yes, we have heard that long ago there were three seers (*abakunguluka*), X and Y and Z [I missed the names], who went with two village headmen to look; one seer uprooted the *ikisajelo* grass to look beneath at the land of the shades and he called the village headmen to look. When they shrank back and said 'He!' he said it was a homestead such as those above.

QUESTION: Did this happen in the day-time?

KAKUNE: It happened in the day-time, in the open, not in a dream. But later on, when one village headman had gone he said: 'Let me look again.' He tried to uproot it but the *ikisajelo* grass was stuck, it would not come up. But all that happened a long time ago; seers are not seen nowadays. And when we have finished everything, at the time of destroying the ritual house, the doctor touches us all with the razor, that is the tuft (*itemelo*).

QUESTION: Is this before the beer of inheritance? 764

KAKUNE: Yes, before the beer, on the day of bathing. It means that letting the 'hair of the corpse' grow is finished, we have finished. You may drink freely. And have we written about the roasted chicken and the bananas?[2]

G. W.: No.

KAKUNE: What? No? But we all eat these with our fellow villagers—and a bull if we have killed one, for we kill a bull if we have it—at the bathing in the stream. And in the evening the doctor prepares the

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[1] The statement above was not made quite so straightforwardly as it is written down; at certain points Kakune stopped and I prompted him either with: 'And then?' or 'What does that mean?' There were no leading questions and I took down his words exactly.

[2] Our best informants often asked whether what they told us was properly recorded.

764 porridge—sausages of porridge are buried in the ground and bitten off by the principals who stoop down to do it.

QUESTION: What does it mean?

KAKUNE: It means that we are about to honour them; they eat, and he whom we have buried also remains below, he also eats, we bury the sausage in the earth and we say we are burying him also, then he will fear to come to the house.

QUESTION: And this porridge is a symbol of the filth which those who run mad eat?

KAKUNE (laughing): Yes, because if we omit to do these things the children become feeble, their hearts say 'He! he!' [panting and excited] and they rush off to the road and eat dirt (*imindo*).

QUESTION: Why should the shades do this to them? How are they interested in dirt (*imindo*)?

KAKUNE: I don't know. We say it is because we have not accompanied them on the road and on account of this the shade is very angry and says: 'We shall see whether their children flourish!' He has bewitched them (*abalogile*).

QUESTION: And what about the circling round with the harp and the trampling at the fire?

KAKUNE: That is not very important, Mwaipaja [G. W.], it is because he cultivated food and danced at beer drinks when he was alive, so we dance for him now that he is dead. . . . A widow must lie
[587 with her husband the night before she comes to do the (*ingotolo*) ritual,
833] and she comes with his filth on her, she does not wash. If she comes without having lain with him the night before then we all get the
[753] disease. The disease comes from the new husband, it comes from his seed, the seed that begets us men. When his seed enters her womb then she is heavy (*nsito*) and if she eats or drinks out of our dishes and pots while we are empty (*bwasi*), before we have stopped ourselves with medicines, then she gives us the disease. She has not given us the protective medicine (*imbosyo*).

764 753 If a woman changes from one husband to another and both are alive, there is no danger and no ritual. It is death that brings the danger, because that man [her first husband] has died; he has died and rotted below, and from that disease comes. The disease only comes from this situation. If no relative has died there is no *ingotolo*. But if my wife has run off with another man and then comes back to me with his semen in her, then I take some powdered medicine and eat some and throw a little on the fire, and if I do not do this then my legs will hurt, I shall be unable to walk properly, and my body will become weak. Neither she nor her relatives take medicine, nor does her new husband, if she goes to him and he pays for her and takes her. He just marries her.

764 587 If the widow is left with a sucking child and is empty [*bwasi*: i.e. her

new husband has not been sleeping with her], then at first, before she 764
lies with him, we (her relatives) eat with her. But when the child leaves 587
the breast and her husband begets another then she comes to perform the ritual. Otherwise we cannot eat with her. And so with a pregnant widow—at first we eat with her but when the child is born and has been weaned and her new husband begets another she comes to perform the ritual.

The new husband must send a bull or a sheep with his spear, and we who drink the beer divide the meat, saying: 'Thank you, you have nourished us.' Yesterday he sent 30s., and I, the doctor, got 1s. If it had been a bull I would have got some meat. The husband does not come himself, but he sends a friend to bring the woman. This friend does not eat or drink the medicine, but he drinks the beer without medicine and the cassava we cook. [In the ritual just completed] Mwasalemba provided three pots of beer—we drank one before and two after the ceremony. That was what the men were waiting for.

No, it never happens that one who has drunk the medicine of 764
ingotolo falls sick of it afterwards, never. 753

The spear is taken and kept by the girl's brother at the command of 587
her father, who says: 'Take this spear, your sister has brought it.' It is 602
a symbol (*ikimanyilo*) of kinship, it is like the spear with which a girl was betrothed in the old days. At the betrothal the lover would stick the spear in the ground, the girl pulled it up and took it to her father, sticking it into the ground before him, and he, if he agreed, told her brother to take it up. And if there is any dispute later about cattle then the spear is proof of agreement. It has the same significance at betrothal and at the *ingotolo* ritual. Sometimes the heir has to bring cattle that have not yet been paid by the dead man. When the woman's brother takes the spear into the house at the *ingotolo* ritual, that means: 'Now you[1] have entered into the house—your house—so we bring you in.' And then she can go in.

The calling out of 'Thief' is a custom in the ritual, but it is like a 764
song, it's not important. The firewood is shown to the woman and a bean and a grain of maize are put into a crack of the wood. That means that the ritual is complete.

No, there is no extra safety in coming to the ceremony; those who drink at home are equally protected!

iii. *Evidence of other informants*

CURRENT TALK: Some people have been told by those who have run 158
mad, that they see a man who comes to them sometimes. When that 828
man is with them then they lose the sense of what they are doing. The

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[1] It was not clear from the context whether 'you' referred to groom or bride. The symbolism suggests the act of marriage but of this we have no direct evidence.

158 828 and fashions earth with his fingers, tying some up in leaves and rolling some up between his palms, if he does things which they do in the ritual, then they perform the whole ritual. Saga, Jenala's grandmother, did these things, but then they began to perform the ritual and at once she recovered. She just talked to herself and went on moulding earth. She could not throw her clothes away for she was sick, her death was very near. As soon as they had done the ritual and she had recovered, she died. The reason they had not performed a complete ritual for her was because she had been away at the time it was performed. She had run off with a lover. It was the ritual of her mother which was not performed for her.

It is clear that, though informants were not agreed about the distinguishing features of the two types of madness, they were agreed about its general characteristics, and that one form was connected with neglect of rituals.

● 764 346 QUESTION: Why the little hut?

MWAMULENGA (an old chief): When performing the ritual they build a little hut in which to carry it out. This hut tells us of the man's behaviour when alive, he lived in a house. So that now he is dead we kill his home too, and that is why they destroy the hut at the end of the ritual. They perform the ritual in a house because he lived in a house.

764 QUESTION: Why the stealing of the stem of plantains?

MWAMULENGA: This tells us about driving the disease away, that the disease which killed him should leave our homestead. The stem of bananas is a symbol (*ikimanyilo*) of the disease. We do not know where the disease came from. When we steal the bananas we think that the disease came from some other place and killed him, it has not always been in our house. That is why we go to another homestead to steal the stem of bananas. But when we are driven away with the bananas that is a symbol of driving the disease away again, we drive the disease away. Sometimes the householders come out and drive us away, sometimes they stay still, and we who have come with the thief drive him away. We arrange with the householder beforehand. The meaning is the same in either case.

QUESTION: Why the food?

MWAMULENGA: The salted and unsalted food, the mash, the beans and bananas which they take out separately, the chicken, the roast bananas, those in which they put lentils and pumpkin-seeds—all these they eat, for they are afraid that if they do not, but leave one of them out, then when they eat, in the ritual of other people, some of those they omitted, the ritual will infect them. So that is why they eat everything. If a man doesn't eat any chicken he will catch the disease afterwards from the very smell of a ritual chicken!

Question: Why the sitting on a bark-cloth?

Mwamulenga: The bark-cloth shows death, particularly the death of the woman, it is a sign of grief.

Question: Why drawing lines and mocking?

Mwamulenga: Sometimes people in a mad fit do the most laughable things. They do not attend to their bodies at all, or perhaps they shave their hair in a most ugly way so that people laugh at them. In the ritual we laugh at the participants and say: 'Poor fool, it found its father dead, went stealing and they speared it on the head!' And then we think that he, as it were, has run mad after his father's death.

Question: Why the flowers?

Mwamulenga: The holding of a flower (and grass) also shows the actions of madmen. For sometimes the madman goes into the grassland and plays games with the flowers and grass and then, coming home, throws them on the thatch.

Mwaikambo: People talk about what madmen do, but I have never seen a mad person, I have only heard what people say. They say a mad person talks to himself like someone in a passion of grief, or anger, or fear, and moulds earth!

Mwafula (the village headman) does the Sangu ritual and did not know why the banana is stolen, though he understood the main function of the ritual. His wife, a Kukwe, did not know, nor did either of the two others. 'The old people have always told us: "If you leave something out of the ritual you will go mad, or perhaps someone will die. You will find the ritual (*ubunyago*) in the belly [at the autopsy]." But they never explained all the details, saying: "This means such and such, and that such and such." We do not know all the ramifications. As for finding the ritual in the stomach of a dead child, they find half-digested food and say: "It is the ritual (*bunyago*)."'

Question: Why do you go and steal another's banana in the ritual?

Nsyani: It means that if your comrade's father has also died he [your comrade] may eat because they have mocked him, he can eat because he has finished; we say: 'Are you not going to take someone else's sickness on you (*utisakukombela ifya bangi*)?'[1] Because those who have not been treated do not eat.

Question: So you act stealing and eating the food in another's ritual?

Nsyani: Yes, indeed [with a gesture of emphatic assent]. So here we mock the mourners, saying: 'That's a thief!' and we steal someone

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[1] *Ukukombela*: to catch someone else's sickness, or to take another's quarrel on oneself.

2: Wilson E.-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

[Facing p. 84]

3. *The beer of the 'gasping cough.' Mwasalemba on the left*

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764 else's stem of bananas symbolizing that we may eat other people's food, we have finished the ritual. Because during the ritual those who have not completed it eat apart. If they eat ordinarily we say of them: 'You so-and-so, you!' And at the last beer of the death ritual, when they have mixed the beer, we . . . say to the women: 'Where will you go?' 'We will find his cattle.' 'Very well.' Then we drink. But if the widows agree, according to custom, then we give them to our comrade, saying: 'These are your wives.' He sleeps with them in the house and we drink.

Question: What does circling with the harp mean?

Nsyani: We spoke of that before. He who plays the harp is just someone who makes us go in line, they have finished him, he was brooded over. He says: 'Let me help my friend and play the harp for him and make him circle round.'

Question: And what does the stamping dance (*ukukanya inganya*) mean?

[789] Nsyani: It is to drive away sickness, to drive him away, to say: 'Go away with your sickness'.

Question: But how exactly?

Nsyani: Because he who has died trampled the ground long ago when his father died, and we trample now that he has died, and his father trampled for his grandfather, and his grandfather for an ancestor. It means: 'We have finished with you, go away.' And at the bathing we put pebbles between our fingers and let them fall into the stream. . . [He performed a dramatic pantomime of sitting down in the water and falling first one way and then the other, and pushing his hands away so that they let the stones fall out. As he let them fall he said: 'We have driven you away, we have finished with you!']. . .

Question: Why the shelling oil-seeds during the circling round?

Nsyani and Mwangwanda: We do not do it, we differ in our rituals. But we do the stealing of the banana bunch and throwing things in the pot at the fire, and hitting the ground and saying: '*Syeku, syeku.*'

Question: Why?

Nsyani and Mwangwanda: Because if we don't do it our children run into the pasturage and make balls of rubbish (*ifisaka fya mindu*) and eat; then they become weak and foolish; but if we perform the ritual then they are fine children.

Question: Why the throwing into the pot?

Nsyani and Mwangwanda: It means that we have finished with him [with a gesture of throwing away].

Question: Why the washing at first?

Mwafula: If we do not wash them they become weak and foolish, so we treat them and wash them and give them porridge, and then they recover. If we leave them they go off to the rubbish heap and make dirt (*bipelile mindo*); they take the dirt from the rubbish heap, they

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[Facing p. 85]

4. *The bride washes with* ikipiki *in the doorway of her mother's hut*

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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Kukwe

even defaecate in the house. And at the inheritance, when I have inherited the women, they go to their own homes with a bull if I am wealthy, or perhaps three shillings. They go back to their fathers with the dirt on them—*ingotolo*! 764

QUESTION: Where does the *ingotolo* come from when you do not treat them?

MWAFULA: Kyala is startled and you gasp with *ingotolo*, your breath is short.

QUESTION: Does the husband also go to his place?

MWAFULA: Yes, he always returns to his father's.

QUESTION: Why the two leaves representing a man and a woman at the hitting the ground and saying: '*Syeku, syeku*'?

MWAFULA: Because we are two [holding up two fingers], a man and a woman. Formerly when someone died as a bachelor they took a leaf of the sweet banana and said: 'It is your wife.' They buried it with him, saying: 'Go to the land of the shades because you were never married.'

QUESTION: What does the mocking at shaving mean?

MWAFULA: It is one with stealing the plantain stem. We mock them meaning, may they escape, and not take rubbish from the rubbish heap. And at the shaving of the hair we drive him away, saying: 'Go to your fellows.' He has been alone, he was on the road, may he go.

Porokoto the Chief admitted that the wearing of leaves and 842
bananas in the rituals of death and of puberty were symbols of 881
fertility (*ifimanyilo fya mbapo*); the plantain represents the penis, the sweet banana represents the clitoris, 'for in the old days they wore leaves only, no cloths'. In the puberty ritual the wearing of leaves and bananas is the same. It is a sign of fertility: 'the ritual is now finished and the girl is someone's wife.'

Mwaijumba, who provided the beer of inheritance for the ritual 273
of Njobe Nani, explained to us as he drank: 'We drink beer to 764
drive away our friend. It means that everything is finished: "Come to your house frequently now. It is finished! May the fathers [i.e. the other shades] receive him! May he not return! We have poured out this beer for you, it is finished."'

845 833 and the doctor stands outside at the door. The doctor asks: 'Is it successful? [i.e. can you have intercourse with her?]' and the man says: 'No, it is not successful.' Then all we *abanyago* (priests, officiants), the fathers of the girl who are there, and the fathers of the man, pray, in words only [i.e. without blowing out water], saying: 'Father, support us, Grandfather, support us, Kyala, support us, let not the ritual go on for ever.' And then the man is able to eject, and he tells the doctor: 'It's all right now.'

845 753 The disease comes from the twin birth (*ilipasa*) when a couple have had twins (*bapasile*). If the relatives speak with them or tread in their footsteps when they [the relatives] are empty (*bwasi*), not having drunk medicine, then their legs will swell up and they will have diarrhoea. No, they do not say that the private parts will swell, only the legs. The refusal of the seed to come is due to the shades (*iminda*). If a man has angered his father or mother who are alive, or if they are dead and he gives nothing to his sister, then those below, *balungu*, are angry. *Iminda* catches hold of them and then when he begets twins he will have trouble at the ritual.

845 833 The semen refuses to come also if the girl has angered her parents, or if her husband has angered them. It's *iminda*. This copulation is an essential part of the ritual. If the parents of twins do not do this and you meet them afterwards, your legs will swell and dysentery will set in. The fearful ones [the parents of twins] have a fire and create sickness in us. We say: 'Kyala has loved [*sic*] you, he has created you so that you bear twin children. Now we speak with you.'

845 Yes, the old people said: 'Kyala and those below.' They said those below beg Kyala to give them two children. This was said of old, before the Europeans came. One who has himself had twins will not fear his relative who has twins for he says: 'I also am heavy (*ndi nsito*), I am a fearful one, a parent of twins myself.' No one fears the twins themselves, but their parents are feared.

The child that follows twins (*ndili*), does not anoint himself at any later twin ritual. It is said that he finished before because he followed twins.

When the parents of twins leave the hut they run with a lighted piece of thatch,[1] followed by all the friends and relatives; the friends and relatives call out: 'You hit us with fire [i.e. you give us the disease].' They reply: 'We are pure (*tuli bela*) [i.e. we have no disease, it is finished]. Kyala has prayed for us.'

845 764 And at the death of a parent of twins the relatives fear to touch the corpse until the twin doctor comes and puts a medicine in the hand of the corpse and sprinkles hot medicine on the legs of the relatives—then

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[1] This was not seen or mentioned in the Selya ritual.

they take hold of the corpse. But they wait for the doctor; if they do not 845
do so the same disease will come—a swelling of legs and diarrhoea. An 764
ordinary corpse is not feared in this way. [753]

Yes, a man fears to take his other wives. He says: 'If I just go to them
I shall give them the disease of the twins that I begot with this wife.' 845
The wife he takes without precaution will swell in the legs and stomach, 842
and pass blood with her stools. He first tries to have a child with the
wife who bore twins, waiting till the twins are walking about. He lies
with the mother of the twins but withdraws, and then, when the
children are grown, he impregnates her. He does not go to the other
wives. And if he asks for another wife before trying to impregnate the
mother of the twins her father will refuse. If he takes her without asking,
her father will make him pay a cow. He can only ask for another wife
if the mother of the twins does not conceive. For one month[1] the husband
refrains altogether from intercourse, then after the ritual he goes [834]
to his wife (the mother of the twins) but does not impregnate her. . . .
A man is supposed to tell the twin doctor before he begets another
child with his wife. He must do it openly, and not in secret. It is taboo
to do it secretly. Nothing happens, but the doctor is angry, saying:
'Why did you not tell me, the doctor, the owner of the body?'

Themes already familiar from the death and puberty-marriage 845
rituals recur again here. The parents of twins are isolated and 783
cleansed like mourners and nubile girls. Contact with them is held
to be dangerous because 'those below'—in this case Kyala and
Mbasi rather than the shades—have brooded over them, and
must be driven off before normal procreation can be resumed.
After their isolation the *ilibalaga*—the symbol of their ritual union
—must be offered to the shades of both lineages, that of the man
and that of the woman. There is also the eating of balls of porridge,
the symbol, in the other rituals, of the actions of a madman,
but the fear of madness was not adduced by our informants as the
purpose of the twin ritual; rather it is the formidable potency
which produces two children instead of one, that is the danger—
'the parents of twins have a fire'—and men protect themselves
against it by burning themselves with hot medicines. They 'burn
the twin birth'.

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[1] Presumably longer when the seclusion and ritual lasted longer.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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goes on. Mwamasiku was never bound, but we say it was that sickness 753
of the ropes of the cattle that he seized from the hill people. Perhaps the 681
people of that country were shocked, and the sickness is due to their breath, to witchcraft. Perhaps the owners of the cattle took the ropes they had used for tying up the cattle which were stolen, to a doctor to be cooked with medicine. We have not discovered the details yet, we [787]
have not yet been to divine; the divination will tell us, however. But the medicine for rotting the ropes (*imbepo*) is the same for all these illnesses from ropes, so we cook it immediately, before going to divine. We divine when we clear away the litter. The cooking of medicine at the grave now is to rot him who has died that the sickness of ropes (*ingoje*) may not come on us. Yes, only the heir fears to die, but we others fear lest we fall ill, coughing. The sickness of ropes does not kill us, but makes us ill and thin. Yes, I drank and ate the medicine myself. After the divination we drink another medicine, in beer, not the *itambo* beer. They brew another lot just for the medicine.

We saw the drinking of medicine 'to rot the ropes' at Mukwa- 783
bila's funeral. He was buried at Kasitile's homestead and Kasitile 764
was organizing the proceedings. The doctor dug a hole at the foot of the grave and put into it a length of green wood which projected a foot or so above the level of the ground. On this was balanced a pot, and a fire was lighted beneath it. In the pot she boiled certain leaves and roots. She took a large drinking calabash, put in some ash from a fire-brand, added some of the same species of leaves as had gone into the pot, and stirred up the mixture with water. This mixture was drunk by the relatives present and fifteen or twenty leaf cups were made to send to those who had not come. Medicated porridge was also made and some was eaten by the relatives present.

Then the pot was taken off the fire. We were told: 'We are praying (*tulipalusipata*). We want to take the pot off the fire.' No words were said, but the medicines were taken out of the pot by the deceased's father's sister (the oldest surviving member of the lineage) to prepare more porridge for those relatives who had not attended, and the officiant poured the water into a hole which she made in the middle of the grave. She covered it again with earth.

While the officiant was preparing the medicine at the grave, Kasitile, who was helping her, said to a half-brother of the deceased:

> Pray earnestly with this medicine, be on good terms with others.
> HALF-BROTHER: Me? What case was there against me?

783 **Kasitile**: You sons of Musika had a case against you . . . you fought.
●764 **Half-brother**: But that case concerned a woman.

A discussion of the case followed.

Kasitile: Friend, we pray here. Listen carefully.

Half-brother: I have spoken and not concealed anything.

Kasitile: That's what I say, let us pray well.

Half-brother: I performed the ritual for him. Let him die with his hair.

Sister: Let us confess [lit. vomit] we were angry.

Half-brother: Yes, it is so, we were angry. The cow made us angry.

783 Mwaisumo described a treatment with *imbosyo* medicines which differed slightly from the one we saw and involved the slaughter of a sheep; according to his account the medicines are coiled in the pot like ropes, and the participants are washed under a waterfall, though they are not made to vomit like the relatives of a murderer. Doubtless the details vary with the officiant, but the principle that medicines are used to rot the ropes remains constant.

754 (*c*) *Protection against sorcery or vengeance magic*

789 Sickness caused by sorcery or vengeance magic is believed to
783 spread among kinsmen in much the same way as sickness due to the shedding of blood or binding with ropes, and the ritual performed as a protection against it is very similar to the ritual for 'rotting the ropes' just described. We saw it performed after the death of E. who died on 23 March 1935. Her elder brother (heir to her father) and her husband, who were pagans, wished to perform an autopsy, but her younger brother, a Christian, prevented their doing so. Soon after her burial her mother and husband fell very ill and three weeks later (April 13) the five-year-old son of her elder brother M. died. An autopsy was performed on the child and the diagnosis was that his mother's father, after quarrelling with M., his son-in-law, had drunk medicines to bring death to M's children. M. explained: 'My wife has already buried two
[763] children. This boy is the third. Previously we found evidence of *ilyepa*[1] at the autopsy, and this time it is the same. The disease
000 comes from my wife's father.' However, when M. went to confirm

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[1] *Ilyepa* is a medicine alleged to be drunk by a senior relative, when he is angry, which, if his anger is justified, will cause his junior relative to suffer in his own person or that of his children.

764 One minor quarrel occurred at a funeral we attended. Kasitile
578 was given only a little meat and he complained, saying: 'Why do
783 you give me a leg, I the owner of the funeral?' He took umbrage and left the funeral with his wives. Then they went to his home to say: 'We are in the wrong, we made a mistake in dividing.' Then Kasitile was satisfied and prayed over a medicine (*nkota*) which they cooked to eat. If he did not pray the medicine would go bad and would not cook. He said in his prayer: 'I have no case against them, let the medicine cook, the young men just played with the meat, it is not a serious case, may the medicine cook at once.'

(*e*) *Reconciliation*

828 A distinction is made by the Nyakyusa between misfortune due
783 to the anger of senior relatives and that due to the anger of neighbours,[1] and the rituals performed are theoretically distinct, though in practice they merge into one another.

578 A man fears the anger of his fellow villagers who murmur
783 against him when he has offended them, and whose cold breath is believed to fall upon him and chill him with fever or cause a paralysis. Mature men or women fear only the anger of their own neighbours, but a young man and his wife also fear their parents' neighbours. The ritual performed to lift the curse of neighbours consists in acknowledging guilt and making an offering of beer or meat for them to feast upon; then, while they eat or drink, they *admit their anger* and express goodwill.

> The doctor comes beforehand and gives the sick man medicine to drink. A cow is killed. People are there and say: 'May this medicine help our child.' To drink without people there is like continuing the quarrel. People are there and they speak (*ukwijaja*), saying: 'Someone was angry, but no one is angry now. May this medicine help you.' They drink beer and eat meat saying: 'We are not angry now.' Those who were angry are present and they are satisfied. *Ukwijaja* is to speak many things, and it is like praying (*ukwiputa*) but without actually taking water and spitting.

578 Sometimes responsibility is fixed squarely on *either* shades *or*
775 neighbours, but since neighbours are said to 'help a father to
783 murmur' against an erring son, and since they may share in beef or beer offered to the shades, the rituals merge into one another, and some offerings seem to be intended to pacify *both* the shades and the neighbours, though in Nyakyusa theory the sources of

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[1] Discussed in relation to the age-village in *Good Company*, pp. 96–108.

593 send the son into his father's house. He walks through the whole house
789 and the mothers acclaim him. This is the sign to show everybody that
783 he has entered his father's house. The women call the *akalulu*. They are
rejoicing because he has entered.

There are, however, some who do not return to their fathers. They remain strangers [*abandu* as opposed to *abakamu*] until their death. There is a young man at my home who took his father's wife. Where he fled to no one knows because he is still in hiding. His father separated from him altogether.

A son must always bring something and the father must collect his friends. If they just agree with one another and people do not eat any-
[753] thing, then the son will not be settled in well. He will be ill. They say that the illness comes from the shades. If the father is angry he mutters (*ikwibunesya*) and they hear. At first the people are not angry, but later on, when they have heard from the father about the matter, they also are angry. It is as if they help the father to mutter. Their shades are not there, only those of the father's lineage, but his shades have regard to the people. If the people do not eat anything and are not present, they are not satisfied even though the father is satisfied. The father prays to his shades alone in the evening with water in his mouth, and they pour out beer on the hearth-bricks.

764 KASITILE: If a rich commoner has died and the heir buries him with
556 only one cow, the shades and people are angry with the heir, breath
783 falls on his body; perhaps he falls ill, or perhaps his child falls ill. But they do not meet; people, the witches, are angry and the shades are angry; the shades because they have buried him with only one cow, people because they have not eaten meat, but the shades and people are independent of each other. The oracle says: 'The shades are angry,' it does not speak of people. It knows that people also are angry, but it speaks only of the shades. And when he makes amends he prays in the evening; the next day he calls people and kills a cow and he throws the *ija mmapa* meat in the banana grove and says: 'Here it is, Father,' and people say: 'Indeed, he did wrong, his father was angry.' But they do not confess, saying: 'We were angry.' No, they say: 'The shades were angry.'

754 Another type of case is that in which 'the breath of men' is
783 believed to have fallen on an infant because of its mother's disrespectful behaviour towards her husband's parents or husband's father's sister. When a child is thin and ailing with *ingoto*, the cure is for the mother to confess to the doctor who comes to treat the child all the rude things she has said, and provide beer (exceptionally a bull) to offer to her injured parents-in-law. They drink the beer with their neighbours and wish her well. Ambilikile's wife

Certain siblings perform the ritual, but not all of them. We 788
have referred already to the heir, who is commonly a dead man's 593
younger brother, and who must perform it whether he is a full brother or half-brother, and to a woman's related co-wife who may be either a younger sister or a brother's daughter. The brother or sister 'who followed at the mother's breast', i.e. the sibling immediately younger, must always perform it. Nyakyusa find it very difficult to formulate the rules—there were lively arguments between well-informed people when the question was posed—but these principles emerge from a study of those who actually participated in eight funeral rituals.

Since the funeral ritual is directed to the shades, men can only 764 ●
perform it in the homesteads of their agnatic kinsmen, or of their 602
maternal grandfather or his heir: they can never perform it at the homestead of affines (*kubuko*) for there they are not kinsmen (*abakamu*) but in-laws (*abako*). Hence a husband performs the ritual for his senior wife at his own homestead and her father (or his heir) at his. 'According to custom "the husbands" (*abalume*) perform the ritual, then, when they have done so, she whom we have put in place of the dead comes to us and says: "Fathers, we have performed the ritual, perform it yourselves." ' We never saw a ritual of farewell to a dead woman at her father's house but believe it to be a modified form of the ritual performed at her husband's.

Because of the rules of avoidance, a father-in-law and daughter- 606
in-law cannot, together, go through a ritual which involves the 764
close proximity of the principals. When, therefore, a man performs the death ritual for a son or son's child, he performs it at his own home, and the daughter-in-law concerned does so at her husband's homestead. The widow or parents must begin, and the father or grandparents follow. Thus when Mwandisi's son's son died, the parents of the child first performed the ritual at their home and Mwandisi and his wife then followed at theirs. But in a twin ritual, where participants can be secluded, father-in-law and daughter-in-law may attend the same performance.

A woman can perform a ritual either at her father's or her hus- 788
band's (as well as at her mother's father's) and she may even per- 593
form it according to two different forms, following that of her father's lineage when she is visiting him, and that of her husband's lineage when she is performing it at his homestead.

It is possible that, on the death of a man, his sisters' children 764 602

764 sometimes perform the ritual, but we lack conclusive evidence.
602 One case in which a sister's daughter of the deceased man performed the ritual was recorded, but at other funerals girls in the same relationship did not. Kakune, the doctor, asserted that a boy would perform the ritual for his mother's brother for 'he is mother, the brother of mother (*jo juba ulilumbu gwa juba*)', but in a number of cases we observed women performing the rituals for their brothers though their sons did not. A man's children may possibly perform the ritual for his sister but we traced no case of their doing so.

768 Those who drink the ritual beer when a widow returns to her
602 father's house after her union with the heir are her father and the men of his lineage—brothers, half-brothers, sons, and some of his brother's sons; the wives and children of these; and daughters of the lineage, her own sisters and half-sisters, and sisters of her father, but *not* the husbands or children of daughters of the lineage. At one *ingotolo* ritual we attended there were present eleven men of the lineage, eighteen daughters, and thirty-two wives, as well as numerous children (cf. genealogy, Table (e)).

764 When a woman has died those who come to cut the banana
593 grove and give medicated meat to her children are the *abipwa*—her brother (or his heir) and his wives.

764 The principals at a death ritual, then, are children and grand-
602 children, parents and grandparents, spouses, and certain siblings of the deceased, together with some of their children. If a woman dies, or a widow is inherited, her agnatic kin and their wives are concerned as well.

845 The group which takes protective medicine after an abnormal
602 birth is larger. All the wives and children and grandchildren of
751 the father of twins must come, his full siblings with their children
and grandchildren, and the wives of his brothers, but not the husbands of his sisters; some of his half-brothers, with wives and children, some of the children of his father's brothers' sons (but not of father's brothers' daughters) and of his father's sisters' sons. On the mother's side her father, or his heirs, must take part with his wives and children, and her sisters. At the ritual for Mwakobela and his wife, previously described, we counted 136 relatives taking part, of which 24 were men, 19 boys, 33 women, 12 girls, and 35 babies (cf. genealogy, Table (a)).

845 When the mother of twins took the *ilibalaga* back to her 'father',
602 her brother (heir to her father), with his wives and children, her

782 has been a quarrel in the family, those members of the lineage
602 who have been at variance must attend and share the meat or
beer, and bless one another. Grandchildren, 'comrades of the
shades', must eat the offering left overnight in the banana grove.

593 If a son has quarrelled with his father and comes to beg pardon
621 the father calls his *neighbours* who must be present and partake of a
783 feast and bless the young men. 'If father and son just agree with
one another and people do not eat anything, then the son will not
be settled in well.'

585 At a puberty–marriage ritual the principals are the nubile girl
881 and her father or brother, her husband, and sometimes her mother
602 or mother-in-law. A mother goes through the ritual with her
eldest son's wife, or with her eldest daughter, if she is initiated at
home. At an ordinary birth the principals are the mother and
infant.

●764 Besides these principals who undergo the full ritual there are
602 many minor actors. At a funeral there are the grave-diggers who,
621 traditionally among the Nyakyusa, were mature men, relatives or
village neighbours.[1] They wash after the burial and are rewarded
with a special leg of the funeral beef. As we have seen, the affines
(*abako*), that is the fathers-in-law and sons-in-law of the deceased
or of 'the owner of the funeral', come with cattle to kill or cloth.
When a woman dies, her husband and her father, or her brother,
kill cattle, and their affines bring cloths or, occasionally, cattle.
Kinsmen—members of the lineage and their wives—and neighbours bring gifts of food to cook for the crowd of mourners, and
small gifts of millet which are presented to the shade and used for
making the ritual beer. After an abnormal birth, village neigh-
845 bours have their legs splashed with scalding medicine but do not
621 drink medicines or shave. The cattle of the village are also
splashed. At the puberty ritual the bride's maids keep her com-
881 pany during her seclusion. The co-wives and neighbours of her
621 mother and mother-in-law assist in instructing her, and the neigh-
602 bours of her father join with him first in avoiding her and then in
giving her gifts. Her father-in-law is identified with his brothers
and his father's brothers' sons, whom she avoids, as well as his
sisters, and her mother-in-law's brothers, and sisters' husbands.
They, in turn, avoid her sisters, as well as herself.

621 By the 'congregation' we mean those who attend rituals to ex-
788 press sympathy, and whose presence is felt to be necessary to the

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[1] In Ngonde they are *abatani*, cross-cousins.

pressed again and again in the pagan rituals. The Christian withdrawal 554
from them implies a partial break with the closed circle of 602
kin, a movement from the nexus of kinship to that of association, from the kinship group to the congregation of believers.

The passage of cattle at marriage implies first the establishment 431
of a bond of kinship with the wife for whom they are given. 602
'Kinship is cattle' (*ubukamu syo ngombe*) and a woman for whom cattle have not been given is never kin (*unkamu*) to her husband.

The passage of marriage-cattle determines the legal position of the children borne by the woman for whom they have been given. Whoever has given the cattle controls the children; and, if no cattle have passed, the girl's father (or brother) can claim them. If the woman for whom cattle have been given leaves the lineage which gave them, the cattle (traditionally all of them, together with their progeny) must then be returned, even though her original husband is dead; and when she dies she should be replaced. Kinship between lineages once linked by marriage should ideally be permanent, and the link is reasserted in the ritual in which, when a woman dies, her brother goes to cut down the bananas at her husband's homestead and to seize her children, and has to be persuaded with a gift to desist. The identification made between women and cattle exchanged is suggested in the phrase conventionally used when no girl is available to take the place of a dead wife and a cow is offered in her place 'for drawing water with'.

The killing of cattle at a funeral, and the burial of cloths and 775
other goods, is an expression of the idea that the dead take wealth 764
with them. When a man requires cattle to pay compensation for 431
some wrong committed and has not sufficient stock to do so, he turns for help to his affines, his sons-in-law and fathers-in-law, and so, when he dies, and is in need of cattle, it is felt appropriate that they should help him.

But the gifts offered at rituals have many other implications. 431
Men take cattle and cloths to a funeral '*ukuti ndaga*'—to express sympathy—and gifts are given to a bride also '*ukuti ndaga*', which then implies congratulation rather than condolence. And gifts are used when begging pardon—a son who has sinned against his father first sends a hen and later offers a bull; and a daughter-in-law who has looked at her father-in-law or sworn at her mother-in-law must offer beer or a bull. Lastly, they are used in lifting a ban, putting an end to an avoidance. When a girl's father and his

775 Among the Nyakyusa men spoke often of the obligation of the
●764 heir to keep the grave of his father swept and tended. Graves are in the open courtyard of the homestead and the meticulous weeding and sweeping of this space by the owner and his young sons is thus an act of piety, as well as a means of achieving 'dignity' in the homestead.[1]

775 The shades are also identified with the earth—'the earth *is* the shades (*umfu bo basyuka*)'—and offerings to them are buried, or laid upon, or poured out on it. To say 'the earth is angry' means: 'the shade is angry.' Stories are told of prophets (*abasololi*) who have descended to the land of the shades and returned, and of others who have seen men in the land of the shades while they are yet alive. That is a sure sign of their future death, though it may be delayed. And there are tales of those who have seen the dead with the cattle killed at his funeral. 'We say those are the shadows (*imisyungulu*) which go to the land of the shades.'

A soft, tufty grass, used as bedding for cattle, is called 'blessed' (*ikisajelo*) and is known as 'the doorway of the shades' (*ikifigo kya basyuka*). The tale of three prophets who uprooted a tuft of it and saw the land of the shades beneath has already been related (p. 77).

> ANGOMBWIKE: As a child at my grandfather's I heard that the water from the blessed grass reaches the land of the shades, and that if the shades wish to come to our place they stand there in the blessed grass and where they have stood there is no dew. Indeed, there is never dew on the blessed grass.

At this point in the conversation one of us went to examine the blessed grass and called back: 'But there is dew on it.' Another man who was listening broke in indignantly: 'Is there much dew? There is very little!' and, indeed, there was less than on other types of grass.

But though the shades dwell beneath and visit the homesteads of their kinsmen seeking food and warmth, they are also *within* men—*munda* (in the belly)—they create desire, they control conception, and are ejected in intercourse as semen. 'If you have not got a shade you are impotent, sterile, you do not go to women.'

The shades delight in cattle, and though they demand certain sacrifices they are unwilling that cattle of the lineage should die unncessarily. Mwakwelebeja told us:

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, p. 77.

686 shades usually do, and I shall wander a long time on the way to the land of the shades because I shall have no relatives to show me the way. And then when I get there I shall still have trouble. They will drive me away from them, and I shall live alone, apart from them, quite separate.

775 ●764 More rarely a shade is said to be angry because his grave has been left unswept, or he has not been buried where he asked to be.

621 681 The kinds of behaviour believed to be punished by 'the breath of men' are very similar to those thought to be punished by the anger of senior kinsmen; and, indeed, as we have seen, kinsmen and neighbours may murmur together against a son who has seduced his father's wife, a girl who has behaved insultingly to her parents-in-law, either verbally or by a breach of avoidance, and an heir who has neglected his wards or has neglected the customary ritual for his father, more particularly the customary killing of a cow when he enters into his inheritance. It is said that neglect to provide them with certain customary feasts infuriates neighbours more than anything else.[1]

The misfortunes that threaten from the neglect of rituals, and from the anger of kinsmen and neighbours, are loss of sanity, of life or health or fertility; a difficult labour or a lingering death; repeated miscarriages; loss of beauty (a wicked woman goes bald or turns reddish); scanty crops or sick herds, or, nowadays, unemployment—the man whose father is angry does not find a job. Only rarely is it suggested that punishment may be postponed until after death and then what is feared is that the shades of the lineage will not receive their kinsman.

775 771 688 When Nyakyusa talk about their religion they speak mostly of external things, of the rituals, of the angry words spoken by kinsmen or neighbours and of the fearful effects upon one against whom this anger is directed. Misfortune is said to be brought down on a man by his parents muttering in anger over the fire, by people murmuring against him (the word used is that for the humming of a hive of bees). The emphasis is on outspoken complaint or criticism. But it is also thought that 'the shades see what is within a man': if he stints one wife of fish, then 'even though the woman herself has not said anything, the shades hear the thought of the belly'. Sleeplessness and an unquiet mind are taken as evidence of the anger of the shades or the attacks of witches.

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[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 105–6.

women, daughters of the lineage precede wives. Seniority, of 613 554
course, does not depend solely on age, and we once saw a little boy
precede his father in the performance of a ritual for his grandmother,
with whose generation he was identified. The relative
status of husband and wife is expressed in the taboo on a woman [562]
'overstepping' her husband physically or metaphorically, and
'overstepping' is symbolized (oddly to a Christian) by the sign of
a cross. The precedence of the chief wife is very marked. In commoner
families she alone washes with her husband using the
ikipiki medicine, and he performs the death ritual for her only. A
chief may do this for two wives. In Selya a father washes in the
puberty ritual with his senior daughter, and among the Kukwe a
woman washes with her daughter or eldest son's first wife. 'To
wash is to admit that I have lived, and borne a child, and grown
up.'

All the rituals celebrate a change in status, and danger lies in 554
not recognizing or admitting the change, in clinging to the past. 764 ●
This is most obvious in the death ritual, which is directed to the
separation of the living and the dead. The mourners have the
corpse 'on their bodies', they may not separate themselves from
him by washing till the appropriate moment, and they share their
food and *ikipiki* medicine with the shade, thereby recognizing him
as a kinsman; but in due course they drive him off: 'You were our
kinsman before but now it is finished, you are a stranger.' 'You
are no relative of ours.' 'We are not corpses.' And at the same time
they bring him back transformed, as a beneficent spirit in the
home. The pattern is a common one in Bantu Africa: the Nyakyusa
peculiarity is (1) the speed with which the transformation is
achieved (commonly the 'bringing back' of the spirit is delayed a
year, whereas the Nyakyusa may delay only a month); and (2)
the close correspondence between the change in status of the dead
and the change in status of the older generation, who 'move aside'
at the 'coming out'. Each generation has its day and must give
place to the next.

All through the rituals the dominance of the agnatic lineage is 613
evident, but it does not exclude the recognition of kinship in the 602
female line. Daughters' children *must* perform the ritual at death,
twin birth, spearing, and binding with ropes, for their grandparents,
while some sisters' children, and father's sisters' sons, may
do so also. What is clear from the genealogies is that kinship links
in the female line are not traced as far as in the male line and,

Selya

SELECT RECORDS

I. REPORTS OF PARTICULAR FUNERALS

(*a*) *Farewell to Mwamulenga III,*[1] *son of Mwegama* (*Selya*)

Record of G. W. 10/3/37

764 [762] Mwamulenga III hanged himself seventeen days ago, after the death of one of his wives and his only child. This ritual was held at his own house in Katumba but he was buried at the place where his father, Mwegama, had lived, and the mourning was carried out in the hills by Mwakapesa, the head of the family, who has moved there. The litter was at Mwakapesa's and was taken out about a week ago.

Mwaikambo and I arrived about 10 a.m. with Sikatula (wife of Gwamungonde), who is a cross-cousin (*untani*) of the family. The women were gathered inside the house wailing dirges—words were clearly audible but not, to me, distinguishable: one woman was the leader. There was more wailing than singing. The dirge was punctuated by slow handclaps. Mpogo, the eldest full brother of the dead man, and the heir, told me: 'It is the custom to wail just before the ritual, like this.'

764 515 Food was brought out about 11 a.m. The women had come close to talk to me; when food came out the men told them to go away. I asked why. 'We wash constantly, but women only wash a little, also they look after children and their bark-cloth belts are dirty. When they cook they wash, but for eating they wash little.'

764 I asked who would perform the ritual.

Mpogo: 'Kalukwa (the widow) will perform the ritual, also each of his brothers and half-brothers will select one or two children to do it too. The rest of our children just look on, for we ourselves are not yet dead.'

Kana Nsambe: 'It is our custom to leave some people over, not to perform it on all.'

Later I asked why Bapala (Kana Lwesi) did the ritual and not Kana Ipalu whose relationship to the dead man was exactly the same. 'We leave some out, they will do it at some other later death.' Actually thirteen people performed it. 'Mwamaloba (son of Mwegama II) will not do the ritual when he returns—it does not matter; but if he'd been a son of the dead man then he would do so. The wives of the dead man's brothers never do the ritual. The ritual for Lukosa (dead wife of

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[1] cf. Genealogy on p. 273.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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the dead man) has been done already; that of to-day is for the dead man 764 and his child together.'

c. 11.30 a.m. The women left the house empty; suddenly the men fell 764 on Mpogo and dragged him struggling into the empty house; the 768 women likewise dragged in Kalukwa—still smeared in ashes. The pair were left alone there with the officiant but, as I heard afterwards, they made no attempt to mate now, it is taboo until the beer. After three or four minutes Kana Nsambe called Mwaipalu (see genealogy) to summon them (*ukubasosya*). He went with a stick to the door and pushed it open. Each then came out with a string of green creeper (*nkolonowa*) over the right shoulder. 'This is the sign that we have given him the inheritance.' 'They do not have intercourse, however, until the beer.' Each went to bathe, separately, escorted by friends of the same sex—'to keep them company'.

The two chief officiants were non-relatives, Sikabile, wife of Mwene- 764 nganga, and her assistant Mwanyengenye; but the older female relatives assisted them too, and were referred to as *abanyago*.

Sikabile brought a plantain flower, carefully wrapped in a plantain leaf, into the swept place near the door. She dug a little grave and buried it. There was a discussion about the right direction, and it was decided that the point represented the legs of the corpse and must be set to face BuKinga. The leaf was not buried. 'They take a plantain flower because the deceased was a man. If it had been a woman, they would have taken a sweet banana.' Then, one by one, the principals came and rubbed forehead, right elbow, right hand, and right toe in the pile of earth there—once facing BuKinga and then, all over again, facing the other way. Then they went to bathe. One infant was touched with earth in the correct places by the officiant. Boys and their father bathed separately—'it is always taboo for them to bathe together'.

Mpogo told me that he lives in the hills at Mwakilema's, but all the ritual, including the drinking of beer, will be done here. 'If there was millet available,' he said, 'we would start the brewing now; as it is, we must wait for the new millet. We have sown all our millet.'

After all had bathed, the officiant poured water for them with powdered medicine in it, at the doorway. One by one they stood in the doorway and she outside, and they washed hands, and mouth, and both knees; then her assistant handed her for each a banana, roasted and unscraped, with the end broken off and with a pumpkin-seed and a lentil, stuck in it, and some powder on it. The officiant held it near the ground and each stooped to bite it, then took hold of it and ate it—some bit first without touching with the hand, some caught hold of it. To each she gave more roast bananas and seeds separately too. In all the ritual Kalukwa (the widow) came last and Mpogo usually last but one. Now he was last but one.

The women then all gathered inside the house and the sisters of

764 Mpogo began to admonish the wives. This went on for two hours or more. I heard one of the sisters remark: 'The wives tremble now, their husband has died, their Kyala has died.' There was a great noise. Mpogo said to me: 'Our sisters are men, those our wives have married. It is the custom to admonish the wives because our sisters have been angry.' 'And at a twin ritual?' 'Yes, then also.'

764 602 I was told later: 'Mpogo's sisters punished all their sisters-in-law because when they had gone to their brothers the sisters-in-law did not receive them well, they were stingy to them with food. One said: "I went to my brother's home. When I was approaching I passed through a sweet potato garden; I took a potato without fearing because I said to myself: 'It's the garden of my mother.' When I arrived with the one sweet potato I had dug up she said: 'Who are you with a sweet potato?' And she began to shout, saying: 'Whose is it? You do not listen.' My body began to shrink and I said to myself: 'Ha! Why does she not come to look closely? She says a thief comes by day.' And I sat down." And so they went on.'

764 While this continued the principals were all given ointment (*inyemba*) by the officiant and smeared themselves. 'This is the first time they've done so since the death.' Then at the other door of the hut all the principals were collected 'to see the litter (*ukuketa ulufumbo*)'. They watched while the officiant sat inside the door, took some dry banana leaves handed to her, and sprinkled powder on them in the form of a cross. Then she went out of the door holding the leaves and rubbed them lightly on the ground in the form of a cross, and put them outside to be thrown away.

At last the admonitions of the brothers' wives stopped.

Then came the putting of food into the pot. The officiant held an old pot in her hand and circled round the hearth-bricks with it while her assistant dropped in food and all the women sang '*Ilinwanwa*'. The food was transferred to another pot and put on the fire. The officiant then touched the hearth-bricks with different parts of her body, or made gestures as if to do so, while she and they said: 'The foot is also put on the fire,' and so on. For all the parts the prefix *un* was used, implying 'his'. The officiant also said, stamping: 'You pass by me, I your wife, your friend.'

Then came a symbolic pouring out of millet into a basket. The gifts of millet were not available, so a little, provided by the family, was used symbolically. Two small winnowing baskets were emptied into a large grain basket by the officiant, while another woman said names—of relatives for the first basket and of neighbours for a second: 'So-and-so and So-and-so has brought millet'—ending up with 'all' in each case. 'This,' they said, 'is a symbol (*ikimanyilo*), we shall each bring our gift of millet later.'

Four stems of bananas had been brought and were now divided up—

Selya

one by the wife of Mwabufugo (she had returned home the day before 764 yesterday), one by the wife of Mwamgobole, one by Sikatula, one by Kana Ipalu (cf. genealogy).

A fresh bark-cloth was taken from the tree and hammered a little: 'Until this moment it was taboo to hammer bark-cloth, the hammer belonged to the dead man.' The bark-cloth was placed on a fresh banana leaf beneath a grindstone and a little millet ground into it. Then leaf and bark-cloth were taken away. This flour was used for the shaving. Another leaf was put under and more flour ground for porridge.

Roast plantains were handed round for eating. There was a discussion about shaving the 'hair of the corpse'. As it was late, Mpogo wanted to leave it until the gifts of millet were brought, but the others overruled him: 'It must be done now.' They decided to smear their heads with millet paste in preparation for shaving now, and to shave to-morrow.

Kalukwa has to avoid Kana Nsambe (her husband's father's sister) [606] as an in-law. Once, when she came close for eating of mash, Kana Nsambe put a cloth over her head. But when Kalukwa was in the hut at a distance (e.g. standing in a line) no precaution was taken. Kana Nsambe said: 'It is I who buried Mwegama, she avoids me.' Mpogo explained that 'She avoids, but only a little, if she gives a gift to Kana Nsambe she can look at her'.

Then all the principals stood in a line, the assistant officiant crawled round them sweeping the dust on to their legs, while they, and the other women, began to wail a dirge: 'Farewell, Mwaikono!' The women, cheerful a moment before, were weeping at once. This continued for five minutes or so. The principals stood with legs apart while the officiant pushed a flat basket of millet, pumpkin-seeds, and lentils, between the legs of each in the row—she crawled along doing so and then dragged the basket back to the right side. Then she put it on the head of each in turn, and she put a pinch of millet flour on the left shoulder of each.

A stem of bananas and a bunch of feathers (representing a hen) were brought out, and each of the principals in turn sat on the feathers. Kalukwa who, as always, was last, picked it up and put it over her shoulder on a string. The officiant took a leaf for each principal, touched her own body in various places with it, and then put it round the wrist of the principal—to each in turn she did this. As they came out of the hut she held a banana sapling across the doorway so that as each stooped coming out his head collided with it.

Another line was formed outside, facing BuKinga (as in the hut), and again the basket was put by the officiant on the head of each, but this time she threw a few seeds out over their left shoulders and the basket rested for a moment on their heads. They then went to bathe, and Kalukwa threw away the bananas and feathers in the stream.

● 764 A mash made of beans, lentils and pumpkin-seeds was salted, to be eaten with millet porridge; one unsalted was prepared to be eaten with bananas. Each principal then washed again with water and powdered medicine at the doorway. The unsalted mash and bananas were handed to each of the principals to eat. The salted mash and porridge (in one ball) was placed on one of the hearth-bricks and each one came and stooped and bit (as with the bananas before outside), then took
[177] away the mouthful to eat. 'We used to put it up on the wall, we have abandoned the custom nowadays.' Mpogo begged for 'only a little'. Finally, each principal sat in the doorway and the officiant smeared a cross on his head with a paste of millet flour (previously ground on the bark-cloth) and water.

It was 6 p.m., the sun sinking, as I left.

The kinsmen present are marked on the genealogy on p. 273. There were also three neighbours one of whom was a younger full brother of the village headman, Mwambuputa. The headman was not there himself.

(*b*) *Farewell to Kalata's mother* (*Kukwe*)

Record of G. W. 6/11/36

Kalata's mother died on Monday evening, November 2, and was buried the next day.

KALATA: They will perform the ritual on me and my younger brother and on my son; if we had a sister alive they would do it for her too, but we have none. . . . The officiant is Sijele, wife of Mwainombola. He is a relative of ours, our mothers avoided him. He was their 'father-in-law'. . . . My father is already dead.

[824] A young man present had gone for the *ikipiki* medicine to wash with and brought back a plant, *nyasati*, but the officiant (Sijele) had seen it and gone for another, saying 'that is the *ikipiki* of the Sangu'. However, two older men and the dead woman's younger sister disagreed with her and said *nyasati* was right.

There were present one classificatory father of Kalata with a small son, Kalata's own small son, Kalata's younger brother, Kalata himself, a young man *untani* to Kalata (son of the dead woman's brother) and a small son; the wife and the sister of the *untani*, a younger sister of the dead woman, and another young woman, all with mourning belts tied round them. A fifth young woman had no belt.

The sister's daughter began to grind millet. A young woman went off to look for medicines for sweeping out the rubbish (*imindu*). Everyone gave her advice as to where to find them. Sijele came in with a bunch of twigs for sweeping, and a separate one for washing. There was more discussion of *nyasati*. Sijele said that *nyasati* was for bathing with after the burial, not for washing with now.

A young woman began to clear the rubbish (*ukusosya imindu*) with the

Kukwe

764

bunch of twigs and to carry them into the bananas. Sijele took over the grinding of the millet.

K's younger brother went off to fetch the wife of M. (who himself died the day before yesterday). As soon as she arrived she insisted on the grinding stone being moved opposite the door (it had been to one side of the door). 'That's the ritual,' she said. She changed two other things: first she said that *nyasati* was the correct plant to wash with, and they accepted her judgement; then she was furious that they'd begun to sweep out the hut: 'You must not do that, to-night you have to dance to the harp on the litter. Actually, you should have started yesterday washing and eating porridge, and swept to-day, now you must sweep to-morrow.' After much discussion it was decided to eat the porridge now, dance to-night, and sweep to-morrow. Some of the litter was still left inside unswept.

M's wife, N., went away again. Kalata told me: 'She is a Christian, she is our officiant, she also is related to us, she and Sijele are those we get to perform the ritual for us.' He also said: 'The rubbish (*imindu*) or litter (*ulufumbo*) is sickness.' The three young men—K., his brother, and *untani*—all took the women's argument over the ritual as a great joke.

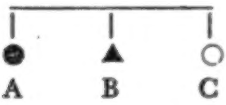
The millet porridge had now been cooked. Kalata's son (aged about 4 years) was stood by the door and a little piece of twig, *nyasati*, put between his hands. Three times the officiant poured water on his hands; and twice she made him hold it in his hand, suck it into his mouth and spit. Then K. and his younger brother in turn each did likewise, washing hands three times and mouth once and spitting. Two leaves were put on the ground, one of sweet banana, one of plantain, on top of each other, in front of the door. Sijele put porridge on them and then, taking a leaf-rib of *isege* she gave a little to each twice in turn, in the same order. To each she gave once when he stood to the west, once when he stood to the east, of the door. She shoved the porridge in great lumps into their mouths amid laughter. The porridge has no medicine in it. The rest of the porridge was finished by 'the officiants'—i.e. Sijele and the dead woman's elderly sister.

I asked the reasons for all this.

'Our ritual is of great importance. When anyone dies they treat us, the children, ritually; they make us lick porridge, they make us wash—for if they don't treat me thus then, if I go to eat other men's ritual food, the disease falls upon me. There are many kinds of ritual; in our Kukwe ritual we eat mash (*ikufuge*). If I come across other people eating maize with beans, as the Ngumba and the Penja do, or anything else but mash, then I don't eat that food, I avoid it and don't go near, I say this is a different ritual. But if I find people eating mash then I eat too. Even then, however, if I haven't had all the ritual performed for me, both of father and of mother, the disease will fall upon me.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Kukwe

764 'We perform the ritual upon the immediately-following younger brother of a man, on his wife, children, and grandchildren. On the husband, the immediately-following younger sister of a woman, children, and grandchildren. My mother's sister here did not immediately follow her, therefore she does not have the ritual done for her.'



B. died first. A. performed the ritual for him. A. has now died and C. does not perform the ritual.

K. has no wife with him, she's left him.

I returned the same evening just before sunset, as they told me to. We waited a long time. K's classificatory mother asked him: 'What about the stem of bananas?' And he went off to arrange with a neighbour that he should cut and 'steal' a particular stem. As the light faded from the sky, Sijele, the officiant, arrived, walking as she always does with the help of a stick. Still we waited for N., and by the time she came it was full night.

From the moment of Sijele's arrival there was a prolonged discussion as to whether or not we should include maize in this evening's ritual food, or whether beans alone were correct. Precedents were quoted from previous rituals, including that of the dead woman's husband and those of the local chief's family. Sijele left declaring that to include maize was a Sangu custom. After N. arrived, the argument continued and it was finally decided that beans alone were correct. For about half an hour after we were all gathered ready in the hut, round the fire, the talk continued. N. and S. described, with immense enjoyment, [781] the rest of the ritual, particularly the bathing with stones. Although, as we shall see later, the stones symbolize death and the corpse, there was no atmosphere of awe about the description—it was vigorous and expressive and punctuated by the laughter of the listeners. There was no solemnity; no evident sense of awe; the two officiants, the principals, and the rest of us laughed and talked all the time. It was clearly thought most important to perform the ritual correctly, but not, apparently, the least important to spread a 'religious atmosphere' over it.

'Who shall begin? Let the young gentleman (*ulifumu*) begin!' The child was made to begin, K. followed and K's younger brother came last. Kalata held his son's hands open to receive the beans and powdered medicine, in front of the fire. A pot was put on the fire and beans brought in calabash spoons. Sijele began by opening her little packet of powdered medicine and putting a pinch into the pot with a few beans, then she poured in some water from a drinking calabash. As she did each of these activities she said: 'This is the ritual of my wife.' (N.B. she was speaking for the child, grandsons call their grandmothers 'my wife'.) Then the child was helped to do the same thing. Sijele put

Kukwe

medicine and beans into his two hands and K. helped him to throw 764
them into the pot. As he did so K. and N. both said for him: 'This is the ritual of my grandmother.' Then Sijele gave him the water calabash and K. helped him to pour, while the same words were said for him again. Sijele did the same for K. and his brother in turn. She began each time by putting powder and beans and pouring water into the pot, and then K. followed suit, and his brother after him. For K. she said: 'This is the ritual of my mother,' and he repeated: 'This is the ritual of my mother, Sandumi'; for the brother she said: 'This is the death of my mother,' and he repeated the same words.

The ritual was interrupted once or twice by discussion. The child's hands got burnt in throwing the beans into the pot and there was a pause for comment and comfort. When Sijele said for the child: 'This is the ritual of my wife,' N. said: 'Let him say "of my grandmother".' Neither of the young men was very serious, and each laughed as he finished his words.

We went quietly (by pre-arrangement) to a neighbour's homestead, stumbling in the darkness, and cut a stem of banana. We made a noise doing so but the householder stayed quiet. K's younger brother picked up the stem from the ground and ran off home with it, while the rest of us set up a hue and cry, following him at a run and calling: 'Thief, thief, he's stolen a banana stem!' Still the householder stayed quiet. This is the custom, the owners say nothing, it is the party of the 'thief' that pursue him. This stem, they told me, would be kept and used later.

So we entered the house again. Kalata had previously borrowed a [534]
harp (*ilipango*) of four strings and asked a neighbour to come and play 764
it. The three principals, Sijele, and the player, stood up and began to 535
circle round the fire slowly, stepping rhythmically and saying: 'Good-bye, go to father! Good-bye, go to mother!' Sijele and N. had previously told them the words and the tune. The fire burned up brightly and flickered on the circling figures, the leader crouching to his harp, while the beans steamed in the pot. Sijele held a winnowing basket full of dry pods of oil-seeds (*inyemba*) in her hands. The three principals reached into the basket as they circled and crushed them in their fingers till the seeds fell out. Then N. called out: 'Now then, stamp the stamping dance (*ukukanya inganya*)!' The harp-player stopped playing while the three principals stamped and stamped near the fire calling the war-cry as they did so. No words were spoken.

Two leaves were then placed on the ground, one sweet banana, one 764
plantain, on top of each other. Sijele and the three principals knelt 533
round them, and N. told them the words and the tune. Then these four beat the leaves as if they were hand drums, singing: 'The ritual of my father (*syela, syela*), the ritual of my mother: the ritual of Mwaijagila, Mwalibuti, Malambalaga, Kisinile, Lambwe (these are the praise-

533 764 names of their father); Sananbi, Mwilwa, Maluhajegila (these are the praise-names of their mother). The next day they explained their song: 'It is to perform the ritual (*ukuyelala*). They call it *isyelala* (i.e. the ritual) and they say that if they don't perform it the child will be like an idiot, he will run about naked and mad.' In all the songs Sijele acted as leader and the principals as chorus.

Then, finally, a grain basket was brought and turned upside down. Sijele and the principals beat on it with a new rhythm, but still syncopated, singing: 'The two ways of the parent! The two ways of the parent!' And so it finished.

764 I was told that the next morning early the three principals would eat the beans which had now been cooked, but that they must stay for a night first in the hut.

Kalata commenting later said: 'We Kukwe circle and dance the stamping dance, but we beat neither the ground nor the basket. Beating the basket is a Sangu custom.' Kalata is a Kukwe but his mother was a Sangu.[1] 'We Kukwe sing farewell and "*Syela, syela*", and we dance round to the harp; but we don't sing "the two ways of the parent" at all!'

November 7

I arrived at 8 a.m. to find that the beans had been eaten. 'We came out in the morning cold very early, we washed our hands and ate the beans. Then Sijele, who had slept the night with us, swept out the rubbish (*iminda*) with the bunch of medicine twigs.' When I arrived Kalata was finishing the sweeping outside with an ordinary broom.

November 16 *Record of Mwaikambo*

764 342 They began by building a little hut on the pathway that goes through the bananas to the stream, near the house. The path went right through the hut, which was built only by the officiants, not by the others. After they had finished building they planted hearth-bricks inside and lit a fire; then, taking some dry oil-seeds and powdered medicine, they called out to summon those for whom the ritual was being performed. When they came into the hut the officiants gave powdered medicine and oil-seeds to the child who received them in both hands and poured them into a potsherd on the fire, saying as he did so: 'This is the death of my grandmother.' They gave them to the two young men likewise, who said: 'This is the death of my mother' (that is to say: 'This is the ritual of my mother'). And then the officiant took all the rest of the oil-seeds and put them in the potsherd to roast.

764 When the seeds were roasted the officiant ground them up and began to prepare ointment. Meanwhile the principals poured water into a

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[1] Strictly the ritual should have been Kukwe since a wife follows the ritual of her husband.

small pot for cooking the beans; each poured a little in turn, as they 764 had done with the oil-seeds, and said the same words as before. The officiants then picked the flowering head of a banana and selected a petal or two to use as a basin to prepare the ointment in. The beans, however, they did not throw into the pot, because they had done this before, they just put some in to cook. When the beans were all ready for making the mash, but before they took them off the fire, the officiants shaved the principals' hair. The officiants made them sit down on a bark-cloth spread on the ground and drew lines where they were going to shave with a bunch of grass called '*ijlosjisi*', which had been dipped in some lees of beer. They began by shaving along the lines marked with the lees, one from forehead to neck, one from ear to ear over the crown. Then, as they shaved each in turn, they mocked him, saying: 'Poor fool, it found its mother (grandmother) was dead. Went stealing and they've speared it on the head!' After the officiant had shaved the lines and mocked them they helped each other to finish shaving their heads.

The mash was made by mixing the beans with the plantain that they had stolen previously, and with a sweet banana which they cut for the occasion. The plantain they say is the man, the sweet banana the woman. While mixing the mash together they took out of it a bean, a plantain and a sweet banana for each of the principals. And to some of the mash they added salt, to some not.

Then they went to bathe. They cut leaves of plantain and of sweet banana. First they tied the plantain leaves round the principals' loins and then the sweet banana leaves on top, and round their necks they tied one plantain leaf also. Then they stuck one plantain in front, and a sweet banana behind, and went to bathe. The principals wore cloths under the leaves because of the women present.

When we reached the stream the principals sat down in the water looking downstream. The doctor twisted grass into pads and put a pad on each one's head with a pebble on the pad. Then she put pebbles in the forks of all their fingers and toes, and in their mouths and ears, and made them hold a flower in each hand. They lay down in the water looking first upstream, for that is the direction of BuKukwe, and then finally downstream again. Stones, leaves and bananas fell into the water and then they bathed themselves in the ordinary way, each still wearing a cloth.

On the way back the doctor picked a kind of water grass (*ululale*) and a certain flower called *utangapapalage* and made each of the principals [324] hold some grass in one hand and a flower in the other. When we reached the little hut (in the path between house and river) the principals threw the grass and the flower on to its thatch. Also they had brought water in a calabash from the stream, and this they poured on the thatch where they had thrown the flower. As the water dripped

764 down from the thatch to the ground, a principal ran through the doorway so that the water trickled on to his body, then they poured more and he ran out again. Each of the three principals did this twice.

One officiant had been left behind to roast a chicken and some plantains, and when they had run through the drips they ate the food. They began with the roasted plantains in which they had stuck cooked lentils, then the boiled plantains and the beans which they had left separate from the mash, then the unsalted mash and finally the salted mash. When they had finished the officiants smeared patches of ointment on themselves and on all the principals—on the little toe, the navel, the forehead and the elbow—and then each anointed his whole body. Then the officiant took some banana bark, twisted it up and smeared it all over with powdered medicine. This she first made as if to tie round her own neck but did not, and then she tied it round the neck of the first principal. She put similar necklaces on the other two and they slept with these necklaces on.

November 17

Early in the morning when they first woke up the officiant brought some medicated millet porridge which they moulded into little sausages, then they went to the path some way off from the village, and there, on the path, they dug little holes into which they inserted the sausages. Then they bent down and put their lips to them, biting a piece off and leaving a piece in the ground, and this they buried. Returning to the little hut, they took off the necklaces and threw them inside, and they pulled down the hut and destroyed it. Then they went to bathe and washed off the ointment they had put on the day before. When they got home the officiant stroked each on the forehead with a razor but made no cut. So it was over.

They said that if any detail was omitted or done wrong the principals would go mad.

II. LOCAL VARIATIONS IN THE DEATH RITUAL

764 (*a*) *The funeral of Mwampiki and his wife* (see Table (c) p. 272.)

184 This document illustrates the differences between lineages in the details of ritual, and the adjustments made for the children of married daughters. Mwampiki, whose funeral is described, was of a Sangu family, doctors of the chiefdom for the 'coming out', who had lived for two generations in Selya.

Record of G. W. 16/3/37

Kakuju, the village headman, called me to the funeral of 'the wife of Mwampiki' in Ipsi village. Mwampiki (Mwamwenembanga) himself is dead but his homestead and several wives have been inherited by a younger half-brother, Mwaisalwa. The dead woman is a wife of Mwalemba (Kanjesi) another half-brother. Kanjesi was an old inhabitant of this village but he moved to Masebe. His wife was on a visit to her 'fathers' at Mwakalobo's place in the hills. She went to a funeral there and fell sick and died there yesterday. The corpse was brought here this morning. It is now 10 a.m. and the grave is half-dug. The owner of the homestead, Mwampiki II (Mwaisalwa), is not here, he is sick at Masoko where he had gone for a case. The husband is not yet here either; they have sent for him to Masebe. The dead woman's elder sister and co-wife is here, and their mother. 764 184

They went to fetch a doctor to perform an autopsy, offering him 20 cents, but came back without him. 'He refused,' they said. 'Well then,' said Kakuju, 'take him a cloth, doctors do not agree to come for just a little.' So they took him a cloth. [763 435]

Kakuju told the women to come out of the house as it was too small to hold them all. The corpse was carried out into the shade of an *unyenguti* tree. All the women gathered round wailing, about seventy of them, and about twenty men.

No cows have been killed yet as neither the husband nor Mwampiki II are here. No drums are here yet either. The grave was finished about 11 a.m. I asked Kakuju about dancing at death. He agreed that in the [177] old days they had only danced the war-dance. 'That was our old custom. Formerly we fought and killed people—the men of Mwangomo (another chief) who came to the funeral!' Mwambuga (the husband of the dead woman's husband's sister), who had been quite cheerful heretofore, suddenly began weeping and crying. He walked over to the women and joined in the wailing. Some small and naked children started climbing joyfully on the piled-up earth from the grave.

Now it is noon and there are thirty-five to forty men present and ninety to one hundred women. A doctor has agreed to come (to perform the autopsy) but has not yet arrived. Although the corpse was outside male mourners went into the house on their arrival to weep. An older woman got up and led a dirge. I heard her say a number of names, among which 'Mwampiki' was distinguishable. Clapping followed her words. Often she just called the war-cry (*alalala*). The others wailed and joined in the war-cry. She accompanied her wailing with rhythmic movements of the body and arms. After a time she sat down but continued to lead the wailing.

Mwakalabela (Mbalakatela) arrived with a cow. His daughter is married to young Mwaijumba, the son of Mwampiki. The autopsy followed (for description see *Good Company*, pp. 247–9).

17/3/37

Angombwike told me at breakfast that now Mwampiki himself was dead. He died yesterday at Masoko and was carried here last night.

764 184 They arrived with him in the middle of the night. The message reached Kakuju at cock-crow. I arrived at 9 a.m. to find the grave finished and one cow (a young one) killed. 'It was his own, and slept with the children'—i.e. it was stabled in his long house in the compartment in which the herdboys, his sons, sleep at night. The drums were being beaten—*I* heard them begin as I approached—but there was no dancing as yet. The corpse was being held upright (wrapped and hidden in cloths) by the women chief mourners, under the *unyunguti* tree, in the middle of about 150 women. Wailing was in full progress. Two women were standing up to lead the dirges; one was the one who led yesterday. She called out: 'Mwampiki, Mbembela . . .' and other words. She stretched her hands towards the circle of women, towards the men and called out: 'You men, you young men . . .' and she called the villages by name: '. . . Lupondo, Njesi, Bujege, Bujenga'. I asked about this because Angombwike had told me that the Mwampiki family were Sangu and did not wail at a funeral. 'Yes, indeed,' I was told, 'they have changed now, but at the beginning [of the funeral] they did not wail, they were silent, they dug the grave and finished it, they killed a cow, and have only begun to wail now.' Two men stood by the corpse (among the women) wailing, his own eldest son and his brother-in-law. About seventy men were present. Dancing was begun by Mwaisyelage of Ibale who seized a spear and shouted the war-cry and danced. Half a dozen men followed him and several bananas were cut. Kakuju began to shout out words as he sat and then leapt up and joined in the dance. After five minutes the dancing died down and the drums stopped.

The grave, like that of yesterday, is an unusual shape. The hole is small and square and the cave is much bigger than usual. The corpse is laid down with the forehead pointing to Sangu country. 'Yes, the woman was buried just like this,' I was told in reply to my question. 'For though she is a Nyakyusa by birth, since she married a Sangu she looks towards Sangu country.'

A cow was brought by Mwakibilingwa whose daughter is the wife of one of Mwampiki's sons. 'Have you accepted the cow?' I asked. 'No one can yet,' said Mwaikumba, 'the real owner of the cattle is her child, the "owner" of the woman. Mwampiki's younger brother should not receive the cattle. No! But her child, the owner of the woman. If he wishes he will receive it and tell us. If he does not wish he will drive it away and tell us: "I am killing my own cow." We do not know yet.'

The corpse was carried with shouts and the war-cry and wailing about 100 yards, and the dead man's cattle were driven by the side (six full-grown beasts and two calves). 'It is to do honour to him here where he walked about, now that he has died. We do it for all senior people like him, not for juniors. Yes, and for women too, and even

though there are no cattle they carry him thus.' The corpse was then 764
taken to be washed. 'We do not examine him; yesterday's corpse we 184
did indeed examine but not this one. He was a senior, a chief,' said his
son, and Kakuju confirmed it. 'We do not examine him. We refuse,
because he was a senior person.' More cattle appeared—'those of his [643]
son at Masoko'. 'It is the custom,' I was told. 'All the cattle come to
mourn. These are the cattle of Mwansasu, the first lot were Mbembela's own. Most (or all of them) were kept by Mwaipungu, the eldest son.'

The drums began again and dancing recommenced. The drums had
been warmed up by a fire. About 200 women and 100 men were [536]
present.

Mbasuke, father-in-law of Mwansasu, brought a heifer calf. Three cows were killed, two after the burial, all belonging to Mbembela and his sons. The heads of the cows killed point towards Sangu country. There was a dispute about one of these cows. They had killed one already which had come for the marriage of a daughter of the family, and they had taken another from the same son-in-law. There was objection, some saying: 'No, we should take one which came from another son-in-law.' All the cattle of Mwansasu and of the deceased were driven through the homestead together, a herd of twenty or so. Then they were gathered at the side, facing the grave. The corpse was carried out to the side of the grave. The chief mourners stood holding the corpse and all the men and women stood up to watch. The noise of wailing was terrific. A son seemed entirely to have lost control. 'Alas Father! Alas Father!' he cried, his body trembling and sweating, the tears running down his face, his hand pointing, shaking, towards the corpse and the grave. A friend was wailing, holding his head with his hands: 'My friend, my friend!' The corpse was laid down by the women and wrapped in more cloths. This took about half an hour. Still we stood and watched while the women began to sit down. Two men (Mwaisalwa III and a half-brother) and one woman (his widow) got into the grave—a tight fit. The corpse was buried with a new pot (a small one, used for serving food), several calabashes including a calabash cup, and a calabash of beer. Some of the beer was taken out just beforehand and left above ground. 'That means he should not go with all our fertility.' A huge calabash had been smashed before this by a son, in an ecstasy of grief. Now another was brought but it was decided not to bury it.

Kisitu explained about the beer: 'Always, when a person has drunk beer during his illness before his death, the remains are buried with him. If he has not drunk beer during his illness none is sought.'

No door was available so a cloth was fixed across the opening of the cave. The women got out of the grave while the men remained in to stamp down the earth. Many people threw handfuls of earth.

Farewell to Mwampiki 2/4/37

●764 Women began to wail about 9 a.m. I saw some arrive with bananas.
184 They stopped wailing after ten minutes or so. Imilanwa (Mwaisalwa) was present. Mwaijumba had not yet come. I met Kakuju on the way. He had not yet been told of the ritual. Mbapa and Maleja (widows of Mwalingo) did most of the work, with Ijumba, widow of Mwampiki. Isalwa sat near and watched while Maleja ground up the ointment. Seeds for making ointment were put on the fire. This was the ointment for anointing oneself in the ritual. Beans were brought in a flat basket. 'We mourn', they said, 'with bean mash and the meat of a cow.'

There was some discussion about killing the cow and a dispute between Imilanwa and Simeni. Just as the cow was about to be killed a woman came and made them bring it to the side of the swept court
[262] away from the graves. 'If you kill it near the father-in-law's grave the wives will fear to eat the meat.' The cow was killed by Imilanwa. He then called the men of the family to discuss whether or not they should kill a bull also. One had been sent by the Chief Mwaipopo who is 'our son-in-law. He married a daughter of Maleja'. Imilanwa said: 'Let us kill it,' and they agreed. Only thirteen men were present so far.

[171 The meat from the fork of the right foreleg (*ija mmapa*) was taken to
177] eat with the mash. This is a Sangu not a Nyakyusa custom. The men of the family follow the Sangu custom. The women, daughters of Sangu, do likewise, and the women who are wives of Sangu, but the children of daughters who are married to Nyakyusa men from Selya do the Selya custom. If the daughter of a Sangu marries a Selya man then, if her father dies, she does the Sangu ritual at his place, but if her husband dies she does the Selya ritual at his place even if she has borne him no children, and even if she is herself a child or an infant who has not yet been to him. But her children always do the Selya ritual both at their father's home and at their mother's.

The burying of the banana flower and rubbing in earth is a Selya custom and is only done by the children of Selya men. I saw five or six children do it. Then more children came to rub in earth. One was under instruction at the mission. The women told him to rub himself but Mwaijumba broke in: 'If he is a Christian he ought not to perform the ritual.' 'He's under instruction.' 'Very well, he does not perform the ritual, for a Christian should not have two gods (*ba Kyala babili*).' The bull was killed a little way off among the bananas. Mwaijumba explained: 'It is just for meat, it's not for the ritual, the further off one. Christians will eat it.'

Shaving of the sprouting hair *Record of Mwaikambo, 22/4/37*

First the men and women began drinking beer separately. Then they began the ritual. They went to the grave with beer in a small calabash.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Ndali

The officiant prepared some beer mixing it with powdered medicine, 764
and they came one by one to drink. The other officiant made as if to 184
shave them, taking a little hair from the forehead and the neck. When she had done this she put her hands between her legs. Thus the people of Selya perform the ritual. In another calabash they put the lees of the beer that had been drunk, with two pots of water. These lees are poured on to their heads and the water runs over their bodies. When the officiant has done this she puts her hands and the calabash between her legs. They look towards Sangu country. Then they shave their hair. When they have finished they throw away the cloths and bark-cloth which they wear when they wash. Then they anoint themselves with oil, and sleep with it on them, and wash in the morning. The people of Selya shave in the morning; at this time they do not really shave, they only cut the sprouting hair.

In the evening there is the ceremony of handing over the inheritance. The heir sits on a banana stump in the doorway and the chief wife hands him a billhook. Then they say: 'Care for these children whom your elder brother left as if you had begotten them yourself, do not be hard, be kindly as he was.'

And at night he will sleep with the widows. In the morning the chief wife goes to her father without washing off the filth and gives her fathers beer, then they greet one another. Ndingania also goes to his mother's people. They said one woman did not go because her fathers did not know the custom, they are Lugulu. There were only these two women, one grown up and one a girl, to be inherited.

Mwaijumba told me that for Kanyosa their affines will not cut the banana grove for they have no girl to give in her place. 'They will give us cattle, we divide (the marriage-cattle) with them.'

(*b*) *Ndali funeral rites*

Record of Mwaikambo

When someone has died the Ndali mourn for five days, and the 764
sixth day they sweep and shave the hair. When they are shaving it they 302
take a potsherd and put in it all the hair that is shaved off. When they 184
have finished they choose one senior woman, the chief wife, and they hand her this hair and they go to throw it away at the cross-roads. Giving the woman the hair means that the shade should be at his place and leave others. Shaving is to get rid of the shade which was on their bodies (*ukumwa ko kunsosya unsyuka uju bali nague mu mbili*). And the people who held the corpse in their arms and dug the grave step over a trench of fire when they have come from the bathing. The doctor gives them medicines to bathe with. They say that if they do not step over fire it is as if they had the dead on their bodies (*balinague mumbili umfwe*), and he will always come in dreams, so they drive him away.

When some considerable time has passed—a whole year—they do the 765
ilyengulo. This word comes from straining beer. To strain the *ilyengulo*

763 **Question**: Why the gathering?

Mwanifu: We were startled to hear that he had died. They raised the lament of death in the morning and his cattle went home when Kasitile and I were on the pasture land. We were startled to see Katasya's cattle going home and said: 'He has died.' But his relatives saw that he had not died. They said it is taboo to lament when someone is still alive.

Question: Why do cows come home when a man dies?

Mwanifu: It is a form of mourning. They should also weep and say
farewell. He had property. For if I, Mwanifu, die, though I do not
have cattle myself, yet because I am the son of Mwaipopo cattle are
764 killed at the funeral. It is impressive. But if I were a commoner and
556 had no cattle, then the funeral would be a flop. There would be no
meat and people would say: 'He has not yet died, he has left one head.' They count the cattle to kill. If an important commoner dies, one who has cattle, then his funeral is impressive. People dance at his homestead and say: 'Our fellow, who has died, was a strong man who danced the war-dance in the homesteads.' And if he was tough in disputes, if he always got the better of them and no one ever got his cow, then they say: 'A tough fellow has died. May he leave a son as tough as himself. He died with his toughness.' They praise him.

782 **Question**: Tell me about the killing of Katasya's bull.

Mwanifu: He killed the bull without telling his neighbours, but when he poured out the beer he called Mwainyopolela and Kapuguso and two others. There were four. He had built in Busikali village in which there are ten homesteads, but, customarily, we do not call all the neighbours, only those who are nearest. Only if I have killed a full-grown beast do I call them all and give them a leg. Yes, it was a big bull and perhaps it is on account of that that they are angry. When they came they were startled, saying: 'They are drinking beer! And there is meat lying outside!' They entered and drank a little. Then Katasya divided the meat for his relatives and took his own. He gave to Mwainyopolela and his fellows three ribs. Then M. said to his three fellows: 'Let us go home. I will not take this little piece of meat.' So they all went away. The other three ate the meat, only M. did not.

Question: So they were angry?

754 **Mwanifu**: Perhaps! We say sometimes: 'They were angry and ate
787 him.' But perhaps it was sorcery, because just now three snakes entered the house of his chief wife—the *inelesi* snakes. One entered and they killed it. Another entered and they killed it. Then they caught the third to take to a doctor, the son of Mwakanyamale. The doctor said: 'This snake is sorcery,' and he will find a medicine to give them to drink that the illness may be slight. But he has not yet done so.

QUESTION: When he says it is sorcery, does he mean that the snakes 754 have been sent by someone?

MWANIFU: Yes, Mwaipaja (G. W.), you understand.

5/1/38

Katasya died during the night. I came to the burial with the doctor, 764 Mwakañamale, meeting Mwamalunda on the road. They told me that the son, Mwakanjwike, had fled from the funeral. 'It is said that he had made love to three of his father's wives. They all fled, the three women and the young man. Yes, they will take them to a waterfall to cleanse them.'

I sat by Mwaipopo, the chief. There was a dispute about the autopsy. 763 Kasitile came to the chief to say: 'They are refusing to examine him.' 'Why are they refusing? There is much illness about. Let us examine him and *know*.' Mwaipopo spoke with heat. Then a relative came and told him: 'Katasya said: "Do not examine me when I die."' Mwaipopo: 'Why? There is that case of the son (incestuous adultery) or perhaps it is sorcery, or perhaps, if the neighbours refuse to examine him, it is a confession that they have bewitched him. Let us examine him. It will trouble us later on. Also, he was praying to the shades, saying: "The millet failed." Then he died! Let us examine him and know.'

Five cows and a bull were killed. About twenty cattle were standing 764 in the herd. The corpse was carried around with wailing and drumming 763 and the cattle were driven round also. Then followed the autopsy. I went with Mwanyoso, with Kasitile's relative, Mwakasenga, and with the brother of the dead man. A woman doctor performed it with a bamboo knife. Another woman kept a hand on the head of the dead man meanwhile. 'You brave ones!' was the comment of the other women, two or three of whom stood watching. The doctor hesitated, as if in fear, before the first cut. Mwanyoso encouraged her: 'Go ahead!' As she pulled out the bowels we all crowded round to look. Mwanyoso said: 'Ropes,' but no one else took this up, and he did not 763 mention it again. They looked into the chest and found something 754 wrong. 'He is burned within! It is sorcery!'

MWANYOSO: We chiefs do not fear the commoners, we look for wounds and speak if they are there. But there are none. Look well! If he had been speared there would be much blood, and wounds. But he is burned within. They have worked sorcery against him with Mwangwala. That is the name of the medicine which some Nyakyusa plant. [824] It's sorcery! Then is that of the country (i.e. witchcraft) not there?

It is not there.

How about the son?

That we do not find. He just has diarrhœa.

Mwanyoso then told Mwaipopo (the chief): 'We have examined him, it is sorcery.'

763 As we came away various people stopped us and asked: 'Have you examined him?' 'Yes, it is sorcery.' Great interest was shown by all in the cause of death.

● 764 When we first arrived, we found the son a little distance from the funeral and he did not, so far as I know, come near at all. He did not go near the grave when the corpse was buried. I asked Kasitile about bathing at the waterfall. 'They will wash him to-night. Katasya died in the afternoon. At night the son and three women fled. They will wash them at night.'

6/1/38

Kasitile came in to see us at breakfast time. I asked why the son of Katasya had not come near the burial though they had bathed him at the waterfall.

KASITILE: It is forbidden, but they have made a mistake. They have washed him irregularly. According to custom they should first have buried the dead, then, on the evening after the burial, they take them to the waterfall to wash them. When they come from washing, then the son takes a torch of burning grass, he throws it down on the grave, and jumps over the grave. Then they say: 'Let him strike the cattle.' He kills one of his own because he does not eat of those which they have killed previously. This is what they did yesterday afternoon, so it is finished now.

QUESTION: What does it symbolize?

KASITILE: It means it is I who overstepped you.

QUESTION: And when he steps over the grave and the fire?

KASITILE: It is the fire which the women kindled for him who has died.

QUESTION: Do they know who worked sorcery against him?

578
754 KASITILE: Yes, it is the son of Mwaikilaja whose name is Mwamukinga, because when their father, Mwakyandwike, died, the elder brother, Katasya, was a child, and the son of the second wife, Mwaikilaja, inherited. But when Katasya grew up they refused to be on good terms with him and quarrelled with him. But they never worked sorcery against each other. So then when Mwaikilaja died, his sons inherited. Katasya lost the inheritance because they said: 'You are not on good terms with your kinsmen. Let the sons inherit.' So he said: 'I, Katasya, agree.' But later on he was on good terms with those sons of his brother. There were three of them. But the eldest and the youngest quarrelled. The youngest, Mwamukinga, worked sorcery against the eldest, so Katasya told them: 'Do not be friendly with Mwamukinga who is working sorcery against you. Let him be at a distance.' Then Mwamukinga was angry and said: 'Is that wretched elder (*ikulu eli*) never going to die?' and he worked sorcery against him. This is the case.

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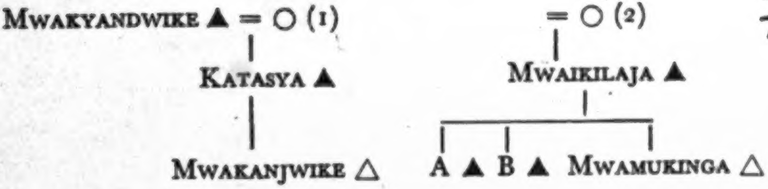


Mwaikilaja, the son of the junior wife, inherited, because when their father, Mwakyandwike, died, Katasya, the son of the senior wife, was a child. Mwamukinga is accused of killing Katasya by sorcery.

Mwakwelebeja came in to take me to the funeral of Katasya. 'It is 764
not the day of burial to-day, but the day of war. On the day of burial they weep very much and it does not go well (*jikanoga*) but to-day it will be well performed.' He was eager and excited at the prospect of good dancing. 'The chief Mwabuga from Masoko, his son-in-law, is coming. He is coming with his drums. The people of Masoko dance well.' At first I refused to go, but he would take no refusal. 'You must come,' he insisted, so finally I went.

On the way we discussed the cause of death. Some say the witches 761
have eaten him. They say that Mwainyopolela is angry on account of the meat. Some say it is the sorcery of Mwaihojo (the chief) because Katasya (a man of Chief Mwaipopo) hoed a big area in the disputed ground. He built a temporary hut and lived there. But we say no. If they had roused up a war between the witches, would they not have gone to Mwakagile (Chief Mwaipopo) and his fellows? But we have not done that. We argue and say: 'Why are you taking our country?' but we are only fighting with words.

QUESTION: The war of the witches?

MWAKWELEBEJA: Yes, the war when they call the witches of a chief- 754
dom by night to fight against those of another chiefdom. But Katasya 721
was indeed wrong to stint his neighbours in Busikali of meat. If he had 689
been wise he would have given them a leg. Mwainyopolela is very generous. Always when he kills a beast he shares the meat with his fellows.

We arrived at the funeral. The women were packed together under a 764
tree to the left, where they had sat with the corpse yesterday. The girls and young women stood watching the dance and occasionally strolling rhythmically out into the midst of it. The errant son was with the other men to-day. The son-in-law from Masoko came with all his cattle (seven cows, one bull and five calves) of which one will be killed and the others returned. The bull was unusually large with an enormous hump and it caused comment. It was well known. They told each other how, when his father, Mwakabulwa, died, this bull was quiescent. It did not move about at all, and it was a very small calf. It was quiescent

764 and sniffed at the grave. When this son-in-law arrived, the chief women mourners got up from under the tree and went with him into the hut to wail. They came out all wailing. The women under the tree were wailing all the time with a leader standing up in the middle. But the wailing was drowned by the drums of which there were three sets.

764 Three young men were got up with white clay spots and some had
535 bells on their ankles and loin-cloths. They held spears, and danced and
302 leapt wildly. 'What', I asked Kasitile, 'is the meaning of the white clay?'

KASITILE: It is war paint. During war we painted ourselves with white clay formerly. Then if I saw one with white clay I did not spear him. It was my comrade. But he whom I saw without it was an enemy and I speared him. It was the sign.

725 QUESTION: But did the other side not use it?

KASITILE: We took them by surprise.

Mwanyoso came to visit me in the evening.

764 QUESTION: And what steps are they taking about Katsaya's death
789 from sorcery?

MWANYOSO: They sought the doctor, Mwangolombe, for the burial yesterday. He pounded a medicine and burnt it on the grave. Then they buried the dead man and danced on the grave. That means they destroyed the sorcery. The dead man should take it away with him.

QUESTION: And has the doctor given them medicines to drink?

MWANYOSO: He has not yet done so. They will fetch him again to cook the medicine at the home.

QUESTION: What about the payment?

759 MWANYOSO: For yesterday they did not pay anything, now, but when they have fetched him to their home, then they will pay some shillings. But if many people have died, then they fetch a famous doctor such as Mwakionde. Then he comes with all the protective medicines (*amapingo*) and treats them. Then such a doctor gets a cow. The famous doctors in this country are Mwakionde and Kapuguso and Mwakanyamale.

787 QUESTION: Will they consult an oracle?

MWANYOSO: Why should they consult an oracle? They know what it is. It is the sorcery of their brothers!

754 QUESTION: But it might be the sorcery of another. Some say of Mwaihojo (the chief).

MWANYOSO: They are liars. See, Katasya had just come from his brothers. He got the illness at their place. It is they. If it was from Mwaihojo and his people, they would have speared him by night. We would have found wounds and much blood, but we did not find them.

QUESTION: He came from his brothers?

MWANYOSO: Yes, there was a ritual because their father, Mwaikilaja, had died. Their senior brother inherited and he also died. Katasya went to catch the junior brother who was there, but from that time he has been ill. 754

QUESTION: Did Mwamukinga (the sorcerer) come to the funeral and did they give him meat? 754 764 ●

MWANYOSO: Yes, he came.

QUESTION: Is he not ashamed? Do people agree that they have worked sorcery against someone?

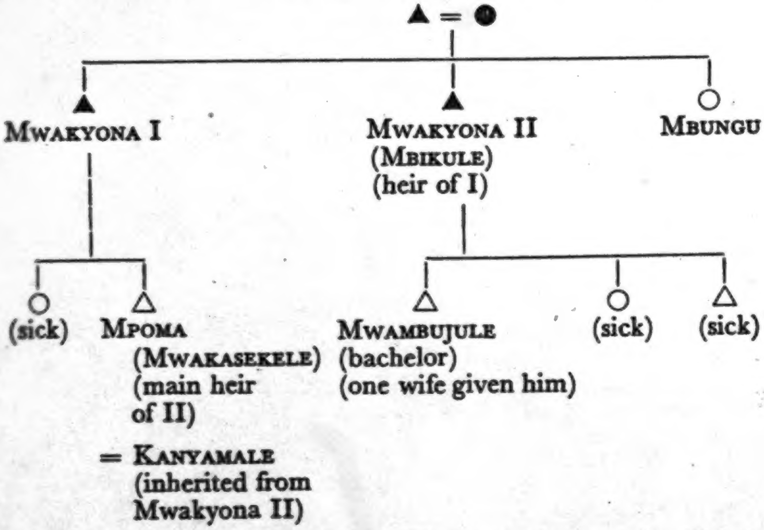
MWANYOSO: They deny it.

QUESTION: Did they give him meat?

MWANYOSO: Yes, they gave it to him.

(*b*) *Sickness in the lineage of Mwakyona*

The following case also illustrates how several possible causes of misfortune were considered—sorcery between kinsmen who were quarrelling over inheritance, the anger of the shades, and the jealousy of neighbours were mentioned. It shows, further, how expression of goodwill by those thought to be injuring a man is necessary for his recovery. The doctor treating the patient made the kinsmen confess their anger and gave them a medicine guaranteed to kill anyone working sorcery. 753


▲ = ●
MWAKYONA I
MWAKYONA II
(MBIKULE)
(heir of I)
MBUNGU
(sick)
MPOMA
(MWAKASEKELE)
(main heir of II)
= KANYAMALE
(inherited from Mwakyona II)
MWAMBUJULE
(bachelor)
(one wife given him)
(sick)
(sick)

MWAIKAMBO: When Mwakyona died, his younger brother, Mwakyona the younger, whom they call Mbikule, inherited. But Mbikule also died, so they sought Mwakionde (the doctor and brother of the chief) and they asked him: 'To whom shall we give the inheritance?' The village elders, their fathers—those of the house—and their father's sisters, were those who saw to the matter of the inheritance. Then 428

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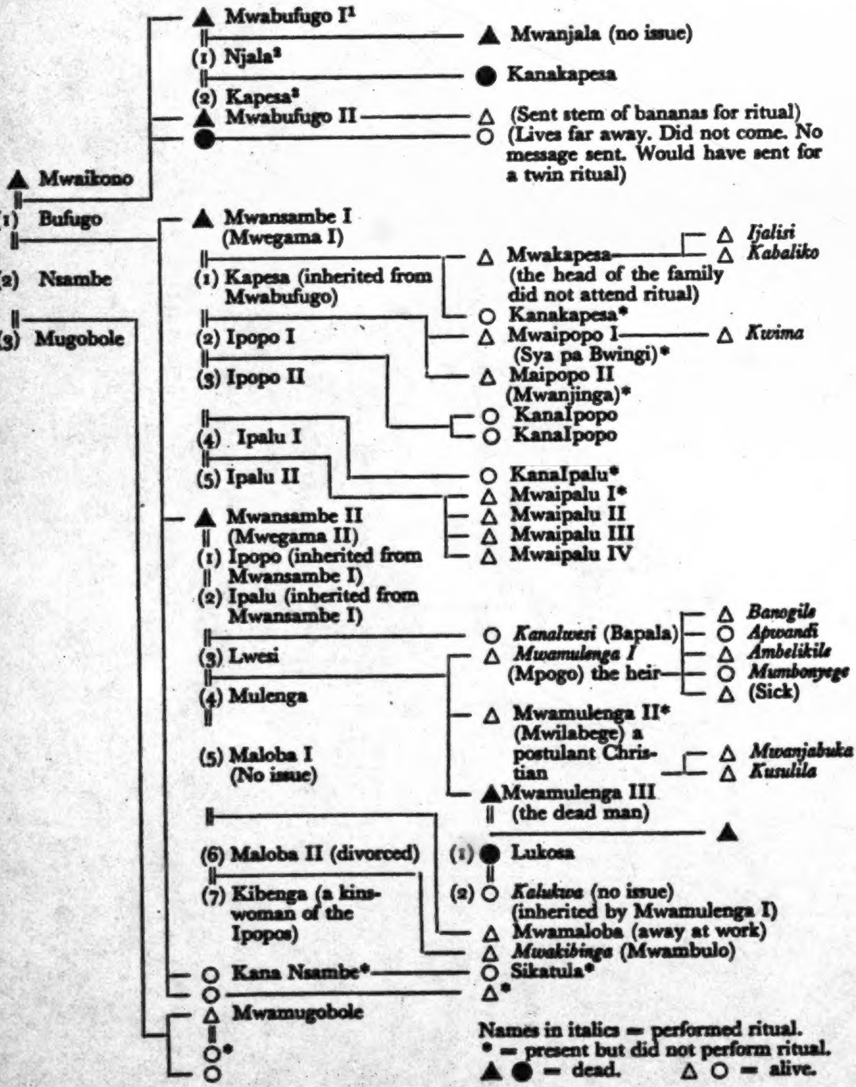
764

TABLE (d)

GENEALOGY OF MWAMULENGA III, SON OF MWEGAMA (DEATH RITUAL)


▲ Mwabufugo I[1]
▲ Mwanjala (no issue)
(1) Njala[2]
● Kanakapesa
(2) Kapesa[3]
▲ Mwabufugo II
△ (Sent stem of bananas for ritual)
○ (Lives far away. Did not come. No message sent. Would have sent for a twin ritual)
▲ Mwaikono
(1) Bufugo
(2) Nsambe
(3) Mugobole
▲ Mwansambe I (Mwegama I)
(1) Kapesa (inherited from Mwabufugo)
△ Mwakapesa (the head of the family did not attend ritual)
△ *Ijalisi*
△ *Kabaliko*
○ Kanakapesa*
(2) Ipopo I
△ Mwaipopo I (Sya pa Bwingi)*
△ *Kwima*
(3) Ipopo II
△ Maipopo II (Mwanjinga)*
○ KanaIpopo
○ KanaIpopo
(4) Ipalu I
(5) Ipalu II
○ KanaIpalu*
△ Mwaipalu I*
△ Mwaipalu II
△ Mwaipalu III
△ Mwaipalu IV
▲ Mwansambe II (Mwegama II)
(1) Ipopo (inherited from Mwansambe I)
(2) Ipalu (inherited from Mwansambe I)
○ *Kanalwesi* (Bapala)
△ *Banogile*
○ *Apwandi*
△ *Ambelikile*
○ *Mumbonyege*
△ (Sick)
(3) Lwesi
△ *Mwamulenga I* (Mpogo) the heir
(4) Mulenga
△ Mwamulenga II* (Mwilabege) a postulant Christian
△ *Mwanjabuka*
△ *Kusulila*
(5) Maloba I (No issue)
▲Mwamulenga III (the dead man)
▲
(6) Maloba II (divorced)
(1) ● Lukosa
(7) Kibenga (a kinswoman of the Ipopos)
(2) ○ *Kalukwa* (no issue) (inherited by Mwamulenga I)
△ Mwamaloba (away at work)
△ *Mwakibinga* (Mwambulo)
○ Kana Nsambe*
○ Sikatula*
○
△*
△ Mwamugobole
○*
○

Names in italics = performed ritual.
* = present but did not perform ritual.
▲ ● = dead.   △ ○ = alive.

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[1] Mwabufugo I was a village headman. The people refused Mwabufugo II (his rightful heir) as headman and the office fell to Mwansambe.

[2] Njala was divorced. Her cattle went to Mwabufugo II.

[3] Kapesa refused Mwabufugo II and went to Mwansambe.

Note. Inheritance by an elder brother was possible in this case because he had not inherited from his father.

[p. 274 is blank]

784 that the classes tend to shade into each other, leaving no clear line of demarcation between one class and another; but there are some that are quite definitely religious, and with these we may begin.

It is forbidden to mock at the lame, the deaf, the blind, the dumb, or persons otherwise unfortunate. The wrath of God is aroused, and the offender will suffer the disability he laughs at in others. "Who mocks an orphan," says an old proverb; "let him beware; God is watching him." To insult one's father is a crime so great that nothing can avert the curse which follows, and follows automatically. The prohibition against the use of names, too, has in some cases certainly, in others probably, a religious sanction. It is *mwiko* for anyone but the family representative to pray to the spirits; though, in a case known to me, where a Christian prayed in an assembly of chiefs and others gathered for the purpose, and the rain asked for duly came, the older people acknowledged that the event justified the breach of custom.

764 Omission of the customary funeral rites is disgraceful, and the dead man will not fail to avenge himself upon the offender. A case came to my knowledge quite recently where a son refused to perform the usual ceremonies for his just-departed father, and the life of his own son was barely saved, so every one believed, by a timely surrender. It is an interesting fact that no opprobrium attaches to a Christian who omits these rites, nor does any visitation follow from the spirit land, while upon a heathen the punishment

falls automatically. If the family "priest" becomes a Christian, and therefore ceases to pray to the spirits, no one will take up his religious duties until he has been publicly appointed by the family to do so. 764 ●

784 To offer a blemished animal in sacrifice, to eat the blood of a sacrificed animal, to eat animals that do not divide the hoof, are all forbidden; though the double qualification, to divide the hoof and chew the cud, is not insisted upon. This has direct religious sanction, but whether the prohibition against eating beasts of prey is so founded, I do not know. The Bandali even now will eat lion's flesh, and at Karonga long ago, though not now, the crocodile was eaten.

Night belongs to the spirits, and certain things must not be done then. If a woman sweeps out the house at night, her husband will indignantly ask her why she is driving off his ancestors! The spirits cut their hair at night, therefore living men must not. If bark-cloth is beaten out at night, the cattle will die; and if food is pounded or firewood cut up, leopards will come, and kill cattle, and perhaps people. It is *mwiko* to clap the hands at night (except openly in the dance), for the spirits do so, and imitation might be regarded by them as mockery, not flattery. A fire should not be kindled at night, nor should one lie on his back if lightning is playing around, for the lightning gets at one more easily in that position. To sit in the doorway at night is to usurp the place of the spirits when ceremonies are being performed.

Animals in which the spirits dwell, frogs, lizards, 775 given to them. There is no conception more firmly fixed in the Konde mind than that "the dead do not return"; they do not resume earthly life in bodily form; though they do return in spirit form, and sometimes exert themselves very energetically. The dead are with God: this is a conviction so universal that it cannot be the result of Christian teaching. And God is not above, as in our cosmology, but below. "*Kumwanya kuno malabasya*," is a frequent expression on the lips of some people. *Kwirabasya* means to be idle when one might be working; and the meaning of the phrase is that man's permanent home is not "above" on earth, but "below," very much as in the statement of St. Paul, "our citizenship is in heaven."

At death, or rather at burial, the head of the
764 family, calling for silence from the wailing women, addresses the spirits by name, praying them to receive their friend. Then addressing the dead man directly, he says:

> "And you, friend, go to the land of spirits. Go in peace. Go to meet all whom we have named. They will recognize you. Salute them all. Tell them that we are paying taxes, that those men are an affliction to us. It was not we who killed you. Nay, we weep for your death."

The words, "these men are affliction to us," refer to the Europeans, and are still in use, though of recent years they have been gradually dropping out of the valedictory address at the grave. Another expression

still sometimes used, is "God will judge between us 764
and the white man," a clear indication that the white man is not received everywhere as an unmixed blessing.

The entrance to the spirit world is the grave; and 764
all that is done there is intended to give the dead man 775
a favourable entrance upon his new state; well dressed, well supplied with all the necessaries of life; for he goes to God. The conditions of life below are the same as those above. The chief is a chief still, and the slave a slave. The rich man continues to be rich, and the poor goes on in his poverty. The wife goes to her husband, children to their parents. There is no retribution, no righting of wrongs. The judgment of God against the white man will be manifested here on earth, not in the future state. The unmarried man remains unmarried, and his body is smeared with charcoal, so that he may not, on arrival, be mistaken for a married man. Cattle are there, but they need no tending; bananas, but they require no cultivation. There is bush for the hunter, and streams for the fisher. But everything is small: cattle, houses, crops, even the spirits themselves, are *sekere*, thin, unsubstantial.

Prior to the arrival of the first human spirits, the 775
place was inhabited by the owners of the land; and 776
"these are they who see God, for God is a Spirit." Therefore human beings going there are strangers, but are well received, and given all necessaries, including land.

Although the dwelling of the spirits is below, they 775

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

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764

[facing p. 288]

A DEATH DANCE.

The dance is in honour of the dead person, and is not seldom an unrestrained orgy of emotion let loose. If spear and shield are carried, fighting may take place, ending in wounds and death, especially at the burial of a chief, who should not go to his ancestors unattended.

mothers, my strength is gone, my hope is broken. 763
How poor am I among men!" If he is a boy he is 765
now taken by a kindly relative and put outside, and told not to weep like a woman. During all this time, and perhaps for three days to come, the drum is beating; a slow tum tum at first, but rising later to a more furious noise, which goes on night and day until the mourning is over.

The women now take up the tale, and one goes 765
over all the virtues of the dead, a long wail from the others following upon each statement. Day by day this goes on, as new parties come to the mourning. The women smear their bodies and their faces with clay, and wear bands of banana fibre or of palm leaf on ankles, wrists, and forehead. The men, at the death of an important person, carry spear and shield.

In the meantime some relatives have gone to dig 764●
the grave, and others are dressing the dead man for burial. The body is washed, a man's body by men, and woman's by women, and dressed in *manyeta* (body rings), anklets, wristlets, and finally swathed in as much cloth as his relatives can afford to buy, only the eyes being left uncovered. Before the dressing, however, the body is oiled, and if the dead man was a warrior, his *isambanjuni* (feather head-dress) is placed on his head.

The women now take up the body, and carry it 763
through the village, wailing as they go. Having shown the dead man for the last time around the familiar haunts of his life, they lay him down near the grave, where mats are spread to receive him. Now the *past*

763 *mortem* takes place, though in the neighbourhood of Missions and Magistracies the practice is beginning to die out. Only the operators are present, and when it is over the others approach again. The brothers or 764 near relatives of the dead man go down into the grave and receive the body from other relatives who hand it to them. It is not placed in the bottom of the grave, but in a cavity dug into the side, the entrance to which is closed with a bamboo door, before the soil is filled in. The body faces towards the original home of the dead. If the dead man possessed cattle, a curious ceremony now takes place. A cow is brought, and made to look into the grave where her late owner lies, her head being forcibly bent if necessary. The cow is now the property of the spirits, and must never be given away or sold out of the family. Little children of the dead man are handed across the grave, and older children leap over it, and then pull themselves, in a sitting position, over the soil which is presently to be filled in. If this ceremony is properly performed, the dead parent will not disturb the children by nightmares. Its omission is an insult to the dead; but the practice is being abandoned by the more progressive sections of the community. It is at this point that the parting address, given in the chapter on "The Spirits," is spoken. When the soil is filled in, a cutting of *indola* tree is placed at head and foot, to mark the grave.

764
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All who took any part in the burying must now wash in running water, which carries off the pollution; and carries off also the danger of the disease

which killed the man passing over to those present 764
at the funeral. Those who performed the *post mortem* [183]
take medicine as well. The funeral ox or cow is now killed, and the flesh divided among the various groups. The next stage is to "disinherit" the dead man, to cut him off from all connection with earthly matters. His mats were buried with him; now his bananas are cut down, his hoes are taken to the grave and the hafts broken, while all baskets and pots are destroyed and left to rot there. His cattle go to his heirs, and his [587]
wives build themselves huts in which they live for a year, "covering the footsteps of the dead man"; after which they also go to the heirs. (Much of this is now falling into disuse, especially around Karonga.) The dead man has been dissociated from the living: the bananas grow again, but they are not his; his house may be occupied, but he has only the rights of a ghost in it; and in many places the house is left to decay as soon as the funeral is over, and the wives have built themselves huts not far off. But the belief also prevails, side by side with the desire to cut off the dead man from the living, that by destroying his goods they go with him to the land of spirits.

The Konde have a strange belief, that a dead body [770]
casts no shadow; if it does, it is a sign that the spirit 766
still lingers around, and if he is not driven off, another member of the family will die soon. The most effective way of despatching him to his proper abode is to burn his body. If the diviner finds that a second death in the family is due to the reluctance of the first to go to his fathers, the body is dug up, and

766 Lepers are now buried like ordinary persons. But in the not very distant past, they were placed in a sitting position against a tree, and so left to be devoured. No one of those who carried the body looked behind, lest he also should be "caught" by the disease.

765 About a month after the funeral, the beer feast takes place. A small quantity is taken to the grave, and the dead man is addressed, and bidden again to go to his ancestors. "Take this beer as an offering to them. The ox that we have killed is also for them." The day is given up to eating and drinking, with intervals of wailing, the men in the open, the women in the house of the heir, or near relative of the dead man.

764 The ceremonies for women and children are similar to those described. A small chief, near Karonga, who was utterly neglectful of his mother during her life, impoverished himself in the splendour of her funeral. The grave was completely lined with expensive cloths, and the body was decked out as it never had been in life. The man's grief was genuine; or if it was not grief, it was fear of what the old lady, with her renewed powers, might do, if he did not attend to her now that she was dead.

When the mourning is over, all the friends of the 765
dead man shave their heads. Omission of this cere- 302
mony involves the careless one in a quarrel with the
departed.

768 Here and there throughout the country ancient customs survive which have been dropped by the majority of the people. In many places the entrance of the heir upon his new position is accompanied by

BURIAL

764 The death of any ordinary commoner and those of less important great commoners were announced to their local chiefs. On the death of a chief or noble or of a prominent great commoner, a hen was sent to the Kyungu to announce the death, and he returned one of the cloths obtained from the Arabs. If a prominent commoner or great commoner died, the great chief got a hen and sent a cloth. The funeral of the Kyungu was entirely carried out by the nobles of Ngonde.[3]

Attendance at ceremonies is a constituent factor of kinship and affinity. Attendance at burial is obligatory for members of the same village. Messages are sent to all the fathers-in-law and all the sons-in-law of the dead man, and of the senior kinsman who buries him, to all the dead man's full and half-brothers, to the husbands of his sisters, to any classificatory brothers with whom he has exchanged cows, to his mother's father, or brother, and to full and half-brothers of his father, and to his sons. These, with their wives and older children, are obliged to come. A chief normally goes to all burials in his chiefdom (excepting those of very young children), and a special part of the burial meat is given to him.

The ceremonies last about a month, starting with the burial ceremonies of three or four days. Any contact with the dead body is considered to be magically dangerous, and to require special purification. A few personal possessions are buried with the body. The funeral rites are believed to enable a man to join his ancestors. To decide the cause of death by studying the condition of the intestines, a post-mortem examination was formerly always made, the diagnosis afterwards being checked by the diviner. The ceremonies end with war dances (now become rather dances of sexual display), and with the killing of cattle to feed the mourners and honour the dead.

At all except the poorest burials, one or more head of cattle is killed. Not only the immediate family, but also the fathers of the dead man's wives and the husbands of his full-sisters and daughters are expected to provide cows for killing, and if he is buried at his father's place, the father's affinal relations are expected to bring cows. More cows are killed for a man than for a woman, but her husband and father are both supposed to provide a cow for her burial. The heir, when the inheritance is settled, should kill the beasts, and thereby establish his claim if doubt arises later. Many relatives and friends bring cloths, some of which are buried with the dead; others are kept by his family. The banana groves of the dead are in part destroyed. A month after the funeral there is a commemorative beer feast and some beer is taken to the grave as an offering. After mourning all relatives and friends of the dead shave their heads.[4]

UTANI[1]

764 602 According to Moreau, the Nyakyusa can cite three or more tribes having utani alliances with them. They also have utani relations between clans and between individuals. When a burial takes place, every utani within reach is under at least as strong an obligation as any relative to attend the funeral and to contribute to the expenses.[5]

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[3] Wilson, G., 1939, p. 66. According to Dr. Kerr-Cross, 1890, p. 285, the Ngonde used to bury people alive with the Kyungu.

[4] Mackenzie, 1925, pp. 290 sq.; Wilson, G., 1939; Johnston, 1897, pp. 427-9.

[5] Moreau, 1941, pp. 5-6.

[1] [A type of joking relationship.—Analyst]

643
769 magical powers. And the faith alike in ancestors and in witchcraft gave
789 to every group of subjects a religious hold over their rulers.

(a) *THE THEISTIC ELEMENT.*

643 Though the early Kyungus had lived on the stony top of Mbande
none of them had been buried there, for "the ground was too hard to
● 764 dig graves in." They and their successors were all buried in the
778 valley, each in a different spot. Over their graves trees were planted and grew up to form a ring of sacred groves round Mbande. Each grove has a name and the Kyungu who is buried there is usually referred to, not by his own name, but by that of the grove where he lies. Thus Kyungu Mwangonde is referred to as "He of Bwiba," Kyungu Mwakasungula as "He of Iputa," and so on.

643 Now drought and widespread sickness were believed to be
caused by the anger either of some dead Kyungu or of the living one.
731 "In time of drought they (the nobles of Ngonde) would go to a diviner
787 to enquire who it was who was angry; they would mention all the
names of the sacred groves of the Kyungus in turn and he would tell
782 them that it was so and so. So they would tell the (living) Kyungu. And he would give them either a bull or a sheep, together with some beer—they would take one of the pots of beer from his own house, one of the pots which were continually brought by his people as tribute.[1] And he would give them some flour and some cloths also. Then they would go with them into the grove. Now the diviner would have told them that he (the dead Kyungu) was angry because they had omitted (for so long) to build his house. So they would begin by building his house in the grove, they would build a miniature hut with rafters.[2] Next they would kill the beast and hang some of the meat up on a tree—the rest they would eat later outside the grove. Then they would tear up the cloths and fix some of the pieces to the house in the grove—an action which they would explain as 'giving him cloths'. And, finally, they would pour out (some of) the beer and the flour. Nearly always, in time of drought, they would thus build a house in the grove of the Kyungu whom the diviner had mentioned.

643 "But occasionally if one of the chiefs had recently insulted the
731 Kyungu, they concluded that it was the living Kyungu himself who
was angry. They would go to a diviner and mention all the names of
787 the dead Kyungus, but he would refuse to accept any of them: 'No—no.'

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[1] *Vide infra* section 4.

[2] This is the custom traditional in the sacred groves of all important chiefs, both in Ngonde and among the Nyakyusa. We have seen it done among the Nyakyusa. The hut which we saw built was between two and three feet high.

789 cooked it instead. One of the reasons for killing most of his sons, as we
643 have seen, was to lessen the danger of his wives committing adultery
834 with them, for adultery was a magical cause of sickness. His wives
themselves were jealously guarded.

643 Then again a Kyungu might not wade across the river lest the act
784 of doing so should magically bring a deluge of rain from heaven, he
821 had always to be carried.

And the breath and the growing parts of a Kyungu's body—his
789 hair and nails and the constantly replaced mucus of his nose—were
643 believed to be magically connected with the fertility of the Ngonde
● 764 plain. When he was killed his nostrils were stopped so that he was
826 buried "with breath in his body"; while portions of his hair and nails
and of his nasal mucus were taken from him beforehand and buried
later by the nobles of Ngonde in the black mud near the river. This
action was believed to "close up the land, to keep it rich and heavy and
fertile, as it was when he himself lived in it."

789 Now the Lwembe of Lubaga had equally magical flesh, but the
other chiefs of Ngonde and the Nyakyusa had not. They could wade
622 across rivers, fall ill and be wounded without endangering their sub-
826 jects. But of all alike the breath and the hair and nails had a magical
importance. Every ruling *chief* in both areas had his nostrils stopped
by his great-commoners when nearing death, while portions of his hair
and nails[1] were taken *from* him when living and buried *after* his death
in a special place. The hair and nails were held to be magically
connected through their growth with the growth of crops. "You see
these nails of yours," said the man who explained the symbolism to us,
"*if you cut them do they not grow again?*" (They do.) "And where
does their growth come from? Does it not come from within the body?"
(It does.) "Well then that is the reason, the great-commoners take
power of growth from the *chief* in the form of his nails and hair."

Besides his magical body the Kyungu had a host of magical
789 possessions. There was the iron stool *Kisumbi* on which he was set at
782 his accession; once he had sat upon it he could not flee the position or
he would die. There was the drum *Mwenekelwa* whose note was
believed to be heard by the most distant of the Kyungu's subjects.
When it was beaten "all the little nobles from afar off would hear and
obey the summons; they would all come together. Then we would tell
them that so and so had not brought any ivory for a long time! Then
they would come with tusks as tribute, to pay worship to the Kyungu."
But sometimes the drum would refuse to sound and they would kill a

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[1] We were only told about the nasal mucus in the case of the Kyungu.

652 431 this was done by all chiefs or only by the great chiefs; but it is certain that the great chiefs possessed more of these cloths than their juniors.

652 431 764 But perhaps the most important traditional use of cloth by the Kyungus was for funeral gifts.[1] The social significance of funeral ceremonial in Ngonde and among the Nyakyusa is hard to exaggerate;[2] for both the economic and the emotional aspects not only of kinship but also of village and political relationships are given formal expression most frequently at funerals. And a gift at a funeral carries greater weight than one on any other occasion.

652 431 567 588 Then, again, chiefs and nobles who brought food to Mbande were often given either a beast or a woman slave in return. "When one of the chiefs had caught a great many fish . . . . . he would gather his men and go to Mbande . . . . . Then the Kyungu would tell one of the nobles of Ngonde to go and fetch a beast or, if no beast were available—and cattle were scarce in the old days—he would give him a woman. And if the chief liked her he would take her in marriage and she would become his lady,[3] but if he did not, then he would take her to his own country and sell her there for a cow." (We expressed some surprise at the rate of exchange.) "Yes, truly, for one cow only, cows were very scarce in those days." And sometimes, in order to make sure he would like her, the visiting chief would be allowed to choose his own girl. "When one of his sons came to visit him the Kyungu would sometimes give orders that he should be shown all the (slave) girls and choose the one he liked best; and so the chief would choose a local girl[4] and marry her. And he could never then sell her, once he had chosen her in love."

Now the gift of a woman slave had many social implications. If she was taken to wife the recipient regarded the Kyungu thereafter as his father-in-law, as well as his "father." She herself became free and her children spoke of the Kyungu as their grandfather. And these gifts did more than any others to strengthen the bonds of kinship between the Kyungu and his subordinate chiefs.

652 431 To his common subjects also, if they had deserved well of him, the Kyungu would occasionally give either cloths or a woman or a cow; and the great chiefs of Ngonde likewise and even ordinary chiefs and nobles did the same. And these subordinate authorities, as we have seen, also used to entertain their own subjects generously with food

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[1] *Vide infra* section 7.

[2] Cf. Wilson "Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial," *Bantu Studies*, March 1939.

[3] I use "lady" here to translate "[illegible]" which is the title of honour used for a chief's wife; the implication is that she then ceased to be a slave.

[4] Slaves were of two kinds, the relatives of criminals and war captives (*vide infra* sections 5 and 6). It was apparently customary to choose one of the first kind on such occasions.

643 "the father of all." All the chiefs were his kinsmen, many of the nobles were related to him by marriage, most of them were personally acquainted
602 with him; and these facts were fundamental in the old constitution of Ngonde.

602 And so also the great chiefs and their subordinates, and the local rulers and their subjects were united by personal bonds which were given
764 frequent ceremonial expression. At every funeral,[1] in particular, whether
431 of chief, noble or commoner, ceremonial gifts of meat, beer, ordinary food, and other gifts also were made along the lines of the political hierarchy.

764 On the death of a chief, a noble or any commoner who had, during his life, had many personal dealings with Mbande, a hen was sent to the
431 Kyungu to announce the death, and the Kyungu then returned one of
[763] the imported cloths. When other prominent commoners or great-commoners died a hen was sent to the great chief of the area, who also returned an imported cloth. The deaths of ordinary commoners and less prominent great-commoners were announced only to the local ruler (chief or noble) without the gift of a hen, and no cloth was returned.

Similarly when cattle were killed at the funeral of any great-commoner or commoner a special portion of the meat of one beast (the breast and ribs) was always given to the local ruler.[2] In the case of a prominent commoner or great-commoner, however, a similar portion might be given to the great-chief as well. "Such an action was taken on the initiative of the family concerned, the great-chief never claimed it as of right." But if he himself came to the funeral it was normally done. The local rulers themselves, with their wives, attended the funerals of their subjects, and their wives brought food with them, to assist the family in its entertainment of the neighbours. And, finally, at the death of a local ruler or of one of his family, his subjects attended the funeral, bringing gifts of food.[3]

8. *THE CHRONICLE OF NGONDE COMPLETED* (1875-1937)

000 We have now finished our systematic analysis of the constitution of Ngonde as it was before the coming of the Europeans. We have had to rely largely on oral tradition and that by itself is always in some degree suspect. Nevertheless the richness and coherence of what is remembered to-day, together with the observable continuity of modern institutions

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[1] This account excludes the funeral of the Kyungu, which was secretly carried out by the nobles of Ngonde.

[2] This was certainly so in the chiefdoms, evidence for the fiefs is here lacking.

[3] *Vide* Wilson "Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial."

178 431 643 The present Kyungu maintains his position by a continual distribution of material gifts, as the Kyungus did in the past, but many of the details of this distribution are now altered. Besides the cattle which he now gives the great chiefs he also gives away far more funeral gifts than his predecessors. But on the other hand, the traditional distribution of cloth and ivory, after a visit from the ivory traders, and of slaves and cattle to those who brought tribute in food has now ceased. The traditional procedure of giving a newly elected noble a cloth still continues.

178 431 643 764 Previous Kyungus only sent cloths to the funerals of the most important of their subjects—chiefs, nobles, great-commoners and a few others. But Peter sends a cloth to nearly every funeral in his own half of the Ngonde plain; though in Kilupula's half and in the hills he only sends cloths to the funerals of chiefs and nobles.

Nearly every family in his own half of the plain now sends a hen (worth 3d.) to Peter to announce a death and he returns a cloth (worth 2s, 3s. or 4s.) as a funeral gift. More important families (chiefs or rich great-commoners) from all over Ngonde send a bull-calf (worth maybe 7s. or 8s.) and to them he returns a cloth or blanket worth anything from 8s. to 12s. In 1934, a year with many deaths, he spent £57 on such funeral gifts and he can hardly have received more than a tenth of that value in hens and calves.

It is this custom above all which gives Peter the status of a paramount chief (as opposed to a subordinate official of the British Administration) in the Ngonde of to-day. And it is only his private fortune which makes it possible. The profits of the *milasa* never reach any such proportions, while, if he spent his official salary on funeral gifts, he would be quite unable to clothe himself, his wives and children.

Now the extension by Peter of the custom of sending cloths to funerals is significant both in relation to the new legal situation and to the present poverty of the other rulers of Ngonde. In his own portion of the plain Peter is the only Native judicial authority who can execute judgments, he is also the only Native ruler who can afford to keep up, on any large scale, the bountiful activities traditionally associated with chieftainship. And he has thus largely replaced the local rulers and the great chiefs, in relation to the common people, both as judge and as plutocrat.

Though we made no intensive study of the areas of the "Sub-chiefs," it is clear that they are not in a position to give any valuable gifts to their people, and that their prestige is in consequence far lower in their own areas than is the Kyungu's in his; they are but subordinate magistrates with traditional affiliations. Moreover the Kyungu, both through his appeal court and through the sending of funeral gifts to chiefs and nobles is still able to maintain his paramount position in their areas.

582 they sometimes do so before the relationship is discovered, and then simply drink a protective medicine but do not break the marriage. The old men speak of a now abandoned custom of preferential cross-cousin marriage.

604 The bond between a man and his mother's brother (*omwipwa*) is mainly constituted by the passage of cattle. "My real mother's brother," they say "is the one who took the bulk of the marriage-cattle which my father gave for my mother", and it is between this particular brother and a woman's eldest son that the bond is strongest. Because this brother of his mother has taken "our cattle" and married with them the young man has a certain right of making free with his property during his life, the right to receive from him one cow to set up a herd of his own with, and a residuary right of inheritance if this uncle dies childless and leaves no brothers. If his mother's brother does die without other heirs, it is only the particular wife obtained with and the particular progeny of his father's marriage-cattle that the young man can claim.

602
● 764 Ceremonies, and particularly funerals, are the occasions on which the effective relatives of any one family meet all together, both kinsmen and affines. I have even heard kinship defined by attendance at funerals: One man argued that he was not related to another because, though they were admittedly genealogically related they did not attend the funerals in each other's families and were not therefore really kinsmen at all.

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572 Known blood-kinship is a common occasion of friendship, but it does not necessarily produce it, while the absence of friendship can render many of the normal kinship bonds quite inoperative. We have seen already that quarrels may destroy the relationship between half-brothers and lead to a judicial separation. On the other hand, I have observed two men meet for the first time, discover a common great-grandfather and at once become friends. A few months later the sister of one of them died and the other went to the funeral and behaved there like a close kinsman.

Proximity is another factor of great importance in the relations of kinsfolk, for while nearness of dwelling does not always make for friendship, yet a considerable distance tends to lessen it and to make attendance at funerals impossible.

606 One of the most stringent taboos in Nyakyusa life is that which separates father and daughter-in-law. A woman may never speak to, approach, or look at her husband's father. If she does it is believed that she will die, through the witchcraft of indignant neighbours, a painful and lingering death. And the taboo is extended from her own father-in-

marriages of his kinswomen. When his father dies his father's wives 622 and cows pass to his father's full-brother, but they come to him and his 595 brother eventually when this man dies. While, if the young chiefs have "come out" it is common for their father's brother to hand over some, or even the bulk of the cattle, to them before his own death. And in his own half of the family, among his siblings and half-siblings on that side, a chief has far greater rights both of inheritance and of receiving marriage-cattle, than those possessed by the senior son of a commoner. So much is clear from my evidence, but it is not yet sufficiently detailed for an exact statement of rules.

Before 1893 fighting between chiefdoms was common and, except 631 between brother chiefs, the usual aim of fighting was, not conquest, but 721 cows; wars were generally just cattle raids. And a substantial proportion of the cows captured in a successful raid went to increase the herds of the chief. This lost source of income is now supplied by Government [435 salaries, which vary from 5/- to £15 a month.[19] The price of a cow is £2; [456] but many shillings are spent on clothes, bicycles and beer, as well as on cows.

A chief, like any other rich man, maintains his prestige by hospitality, 622 he constantly entertains his more notable subjects with beer, at the 527 ceremonies of his family all his people gather in their age-villages and he kills cattle for them to eat. Chiefs seldom nowadays kill cattle except on ceremonial occasions, but in the old days of warfare they used also, I am told, to entertain their subjects with meat from time to time, in order to keep up their spirits for fighting. History is full of stories of Nyakyusa chiefs who attracted many men to their countries, and so gained great military strength, by the generosity and abundance of their feasts.

Every time a man or woman dies, a message must be sent to the 622 chief, and at the burial he is given the whole breast and ribs (*akabma*) of 764 one of the cows which are killed by the family of the dead person at that time. He has the right to take food or milk from any of his subjects if he has need of it; but he cannot take any man's beast without later returning another to him.

Apart from the now abandoned pursuit of cattle raiding the only 631 profitable enterprises in which the members of a whole chiefdom jointly 476 participate are those of hunting and fishing; in some chiefdoms, but not

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[19] Salaries above £1 a month are only paid to senior chiefs. No minor chief gets a Government salary, nor do great-commoners. The local value of money is shown (a) by the tax (8/- p.a.), (b) by the wages of unskilled labour (6/- to 8/- p.m.)

chief from the wanton attacks of witches; but if ever there is a just 622
ground of offence they are believed to join their own power of witchcraft 754
n the general attack. I know one chief who dare not give a judgement n a dispute between two of his villages for fear of the indignant witchcraft of the losing side. And a general unpopularity is believed always to ead, sooner or later to a chief's death.

Chiefs also, like other men, fear the use of sorcery (i.e. destructive magic) against them, and use a number of protective "medicines" (i.e. materials of magic) to protect themselves from it. They also use powerful "medicines" to give themselves personal impressiveness, prestige and authority among their people.

While in the families of commoners an ancestral spirit is only believed 771
o affect the lives of his own descendants, the ancestors of a chief, on the 622
other hand, are supposed to influence, for good or ill, the fortunes of whole chiefdoms. Rain and good crops, the fertility of women and cattle are dependent upon their good will, which in its turn is believed to depend upon a recurrent sacrifice of cows. And for this sacrifice the chiefs, their living descendants, are responsible.[*] But, owing to the continuous division of chiefdoms every generation, several chiefs are concerned in each sacrifice; every dead chief is a source of misfortune or f blessing in the countries of all his direct descendants. And so the discussion of this part of the Nyakyusa religion leads us to the investigation of the groups which extend beyond the boundaries of a single chiefdom.

(c) *Groups wider than the Chiefdom*

When a chief dies he is buried near the house of his senior great wife 778
nd trees are planted on his grave. The trees grow and form a sacred 793
grove (*isiyeto*) hedged by taboos. Each of these groves is at first the 764 ●
eligious centre of two, later of a number of chiefdoms, and in them the acrifices are made. Responsibility for finding the cow for sacrifice in a
articular grove rests with one of the living chiefs concerned, but respon- [622]
ibility for initiating the ritual and performing it lies not only with the hiefs but also with the hereditary priests (*abanyago*) in each chiefdom. These hereditary priests are descended, some from the great commoners f the dead chief who is buried in that particular grove, some from his alf-brothers. The ritual is esoteric, there is no gathering of the people t the sacrifice, and only chiefs and those with hereditary priesthoods

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[*] I am speaking here of the religious customs of the Nyakyusa proper and the Selya people. I believe those of the Kukwe and Mwamba are very similar, but I have not studied them in detail.

8:Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

And. 622
every year two hereditary Kinga priests come a three days journey from 782
their own country to participate in the sacrifice of a black cow to the [574]
spirits of Lwembe and his descendants.

Down by Lake Nyasa, in the extreme South East of the Nyakyusa 778
district, there is another equally sacred spot where sacrifices were, and I 1764 ●
believe still are[21] made to Kyala, a younger brother of Lwembe.

The Christians and the Moslems form other religious groups which 795 transcend the boundaries of a single chiefdom, but an examination of the Nyakyusa Christian and Moslem communities is beyond the scope of this paper.

The political group which is constituted by a Court district, though 636 only ten years old, is of great importance in Nyakyusa society; but here again the detailed examination of its organization and the relationships of its members is beyond the scope of this paper.

Conclusion : Culture and Society

The aim of sociology is to describe single forms of society fully and, 121
in comparison with one another, to explain them completely, in so far as 128
reasons can be found within this particular scientific field. Neither full description nor complete explanation of Nyakyusa society has here been attempted: many important facts have been omitted from the account, irregularities of detail have been slurred over, the connections of fact have been only occasionally and sketchily established, and no systematic comparison of this unit with others has been made at all.

But the method of this paper has involved an analysis, summary and 121 general though it has been, of the nature of some of the many institutions in which the Nyakyusa meet, of some of the actual elements in their relationships with one another. It is in their dealings with the earth and their cattle, with the spirits and with men who break the law, in their discussions and arguments, their ceremonial feasts, their giving and receiving, in their loves and hates and in their admiration and mockery of one another that they forever make and remake their own human relationships.

Culture is the matter of which society is the form; inseparable in fact they are only intelligible together. No two men can be related unless they both do something and unless their activities are somehow connected. Nor can either escape relationship with his fellow if what

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[21] I have not yet been there to investigate.

769 Sacrifice is offered that a particular shade, or all the shades of the lineage, may be 'satisfied, assuaged'. The word used is
782 *ukuhoboka* which is also used of a man who has been hungry and has eaten well of fine food, of a man who has married a bride who pleases him, and of a living father or father-in-law who has been angry but is now pacified. In its applicative form, *ukuhobokela*, means to forgive. And the act of sacrifice is an offering, a gift, to the shade strictly comparable to the gift a young man makes to his father when 'begging pardon' for some offence. A son who has committed the most heinous offence of all, seducing one of his
[684] father's wives, can 'beg pardon' only by offering a cow; but many smaller offerings are made by juniors to seniors to beg forgiveness
[783] for lesser offences.[1] When a cuckolded father receives his son he kills the cow brought to him and eats with his neighbours. It is held to be essential that the living who are insulted (and a man's neighbours are insulted with him) should share in the meat and express satisfaction.[2]

Other conceptions also are, however, manifest in sacrifices. At the offering to a recently dead chief the sacred cut of the meat is divided between the shade, whose portion is placed on the earth near his grave (ideally beside the stone set up at his marriage), and his young grandsons, who are identified with him. The conclusion that this is a communion between the living and the dead is inescapable. At a sacrifice to Lwembe it is certain of the hereditary priests, and they alone, who may share the sacred cut. At the sacrifices made by private persons the communion between shades and grandchildren is explicit when an offering of fish is made.[3] It is less clear in the sacrifice at a funeral, but is made plain
[764] in the eating of grain or bananas with the *ikipiki* medicine which symbolizes the lineage. Then the shade is told 'all the food we have eaten you have eaten . . . farewell.' The communion of sacrifice is indeed but one manifestation of the identification of the participants in a ritual with the shades for, as has been shown in a previous book, the essential character of all the rituals of kinship is a death and rebirth, a death in which the participants—the kinsmen chiefly concerned—are made one with the shades and born anew,[4] and this theme is repeated in the ritual of the 'coming
769 out'.

783 One paradox remains to be clarified. The shades must be

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[1] *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 181-6.

[2] *Rituals of Kinship*, p. 185.

[3] *Good Company*, pp. 107, 240.

[4] *ibid.*, pp. 203-5.

x795 expresses the unity of groups of believers who associate in
x797 Churches. But the two systems are not wholly exclusive: the Christian still belongs to a lineage and a chiefdom, though he does
[361] not worship as a member of either, and thereby impairs their solidarity.

(*b*) THE CHRISTIAN WITHDRAWAL

What is the attitude of Christian converts to the rituals performed by their pagan kinsmen and neighbours and what replaces the traditional pagan rituals in the Christian community? These questions have already been touched upon in the accounts of pagan rituals, but we must now consider them more fully.

Christians withdraw very largely from the pagan rituals of
● [764] kinship which, as was shown in a previous book, are directed to the shades. They attend the funerals of pagan kinsmen to weep and comfort the mourners, and they often undertake the work of grave-digging so fearful to pagans, but they take no part in the 'farewell to the dead' nor do the stricter among them eat of the funeral meat, since the cattle killed are an offering to the shades.
[845] Christians do not participate in the twin ritual which brings together such a large number of pagan kinsmen, nor do they share in the puberty ritual, and they forbid their daughters to keep a pagan bride company during her seclusion. For the most part their withdrawal is accepted tolerantly by their pagan kin who carry on without them, a pagan father even performing the 'farewell to the dead' for a Christian son who has died, lest his lineage shades be angered by the omission, but occasionally the non-participation of Christians leads to strained relations, as when pagans refuse to visit
[585] or eat with a bride or a remarried widow who has not celebrated with them after her union with her husband, and sometimes a Church member, under pressure from pagan relatives or driven by his own fears, celebrates the ritual for a pagan father. The
[845] dropping of the elaborate twin ritual creates surprisingly little difficulty considering how much the pagans fear sickness from twins. Their birth is interpreted by Christians as a special blessing—a bounteous increase—rather than 'an illness' as the pagans call it. A Christian woman, asked if a mother of twins was not fearful when the ritual was omitted, gave a classic reply: 'What she thinks in her heart I can't see; what I think in my heart you can't see; but we *do* see that no one avoids her when they meet her face to face.'

Christian ones, do not celebrate and nothing happens to them, 797x
so we no longer fear ourselves.' By 1937 the pagan rituals of 797
kinship had been largely dropped in Ngonde, and around Rungwe 795x
mission they were disappearing, though in Selya no pagan dared [771]
neglect them. They were taken more seriously by the women than by the men, and many of the young men were openly scornful. The young men are eclectic in their beliefs, jeering at the twin ritual when they may be fearful of any neglect of the ritual of death; doubting the power of rain-makers, but terrified of a neighbour's sorcery.

(c) CHRISTIAN RITUAL AND DOGMA

And what are the alternatives to the traditional rituals? Celebrations at death, marriage, and birth continue—probably some sort of ritual on these occasions is universal in human societies. There is no celebration of a girl's puberty, as among the
pagans, but the ritual of confirmation is, in one sense, parallel, for [881]
it is an acknowledgment of maturity by the acceptance of an individual into the full fellowship of the Church; but maturity in the Church, and the symbolic death and rebirth, are not necessarily linked with physiological development, as they are in the pagan ritual of *ubusungu.*[1]

All the Christian rituals are *communal* in the sense that they are centred in the Church—the Christian community; none is
primarily a ritual of kinship. This is most pointed at a christening, [852]
when a child is received into the fellowship of the Church, whereas in the pagan birth ritual it is acknowledged as a member of the father's lineage by being given *ikipiki* medicine (which is 'the blood of the lineage') by its paternal grandmother. Sometimes both rituals are celebrated by Christians who interpret the *ikipiki* as an acknowledgment of legitimacy, and a medicine necessary to the child's health, but this is frowned upon by the
more orthodox. A dying man is comforted by the priest or elders [763]
of the Church, and in some communions he receives the sacrament, the symbol of his salvation through Christ and his membership of the community of believers. At a funeral the members of the
local Christian congregation take the leading part, comforting the [764]
mourners with prayers and hymns, digging the grave, and burying the dead. The contrast with a pagan funeral, in which cattle are

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[1] The pagan rituals referred to in this section are described in *Rituals of Kinship among the Nyakyusa.*

×797 killed that the dead man may be received by the shades of his ×795 lineage, and his immediate kin eat *ikipiki* medicines with him for the last time, is marked.

● 764 Marriages and funerals, and in a lesser degree births, are occasions for gatherings of kinsmen in Western society—such a penetrating study of kinship as *The Forsyte Saga* bears adequate witness to this—but the gathering of kinsfolk is a ceremonial rather than a ritual.[1] The attendance of the Forsyte men at Aunt Ann's burial service is in no way essential to the service, though it is felt to be a mark of respect and 'proper feeling' on their part to come. So also at Nyakyusa Christian funerals, the attendance of relatives and fellow villagers is conventional—people are shocked if they do not come—but the peace of the departed is not thought to depend upon his kinsmen killing cows at his grave and celebrating the 'farewell'; the ritual element is the concern of his fellow Christians, led by the priest or elder, irrespective of kinship connexions. The conventions are binding, however. Though a kinsman or village neighbour is not accused of having killed his [754] fellow if he fails to come to the funeral, nevertheless it would cause offence if he did not come, being free to do so, and should he go to work in the fields on the day of the funeral of a grown man, a neighbour, his position would be intolerable.

At a Christian funeral the emphasis all through is on resurrection and life. The hymns sung to comfort the mourners and the [775] prayers and words of the burial service stress resurrection: 'This corruption has put on incorruption, this mortality immortality' . . . 'the body of the flesh is buried, but the body of the spirit rises.' . . . 'Our friend is not dead but liveth.' . . . 'Oh death where is thy sting, oh grave (*busyuka*) where is thy victory?' And the weeping, though extravagant to English ears, is much more restrained than among pagans. Again and again we were told by Christians: [761] 'We do not fear death as the pagans do', and certainly fear is not played up as in the pagan ritual. As one Christian put it: 'No Christian smears himself with mud; only the pagans fear very much at a death, they are desolate, but we do not fear, we say: "Indeed I shall die, but I shall rise again", so we do not smear ourselves with mud and grieve very much. . . . We say: "Why mud? We shall meet with him above."' And there is no later shaving or other purification, for the mourners are not identified with the corpse.

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[1] For a discussion of this distinction, cf. *op. cit.*, p. 9.

The corpse is buried in a coffin, if the kinsmen can afford one, 797x
but it is still placed in a niche dug in the wall of the grave, which is 795x
usually in the homestead, for though cemeteries have been marked 764 ●
out in the Christian villages most families prefer to bury their dead at home. The Lutherans kill cattle, some distance from the grave, to feed the mourners but the Moravians and Presbyterians do not, on the grounds that the pagans believe that funeral cattle go with the dead and if Christians kill they seem to support the belief. Relatives, especially sons-in-law, are expected to bring white cloths in place of cattle to show their sympathy and these are used as a shroud, or to bind the chief mourners' bellies, to support them. And the family provide as much fine food—rice, chicken, groundnuts—as they can, for the mourners. But the crowd is smaller than at a pagan funeral for a man of equal standing, because the pagans crowd to funerals to enjoy the feasting and dancing. The Christians sing, and their hymns change from mournful to cheerful ones after the burial, and on the second or third day the young people may dance a little, but without the wild exuberance that succeeds the pagan passion of grief. Often, however, the funeral is a mixed one. Most Christians have pagan relatives and family obligations are not obliterated by differences in faith. So we sometimes heard drumming alternating with Christian hymns, or saw a war dance succeed the burial service, or a pagan woman honouring her Christian sister by dancing with her grain basket, and providing for her future comfort by burying her cooking-pot and cosmetics in the grave. All this the Christian elders present take with tolerance: 'It makes no difference if they choose to do it.'

The wedding celebrations of Nyakyusa Christians are in two 797x
parts: there is the solemnization of the marriage in Church and 795x
registration by a priest or minister who is a marriage officer, or 585
the blessing of the union by an elder of the Church; and there is the handing over of the marriage cattle accompanied by feasting and dancing and certain other elements of the traditional ritual. The Moravian missionaries are reluctant to celebrate a marriage unless they are very certain of the characters of the bride and bridegroom because of the difficulties and expense of securing a legal divorce if the wife is later deserted by her husband. They prefer that a customary marriage should be blessed by an elder who is not a marriage officer, then, if one partner deserts, a legal divorce is easy.

x 797 went away to work again and in time I earned four cows which I
x 795 hid with friends far from home. My father knew nothing about
583 them. Then I wrote to my father from Mwasebe [about twenty
miles from where his father lived] where I was working, saying
584 that I had found a girl there, the daughter of a Christian, and
please could I have the cows with which to marry her? My
father said: "No, she lives too far away." ' Then later he found a
Christian girl of whom his father approved and a satisfactory
marriage was arranged.

A common topic of discussion among Christian women was whether parents should choose mates for their children, or leave them free to choose for themselves, for though traditionally a girl had to signify her consent to marriage, she was betrothed very young and her freedom of choice was small. The growing insistence on personal freedom in marriage is symptomatic of a radical change in the attitude towards persons.

x 797 The pagan rituals were the main occasions of recreation. It has
x 795 been shown, in *Rituals of Kinship*, how pagan funerals and marriages
are the occasion for feasting and dancing and display, and how the
● [764] seclusion hut of a nubile girl is the gathering place for the young
[585] men and girls of the neighbourhood. Even a twin ritual is a festival
[782] with beer for the older men and some meat for everyone. The
sacrifices at the groves were feasts for the leading men of the
country, and the 'coming out' was the occasion of the greatest
feast of the generation, and dances were practised for months
[796] ahead. Partly because of a change in sex morality, and partly
because the meat and beer at pagan feasts are offered to the shades,
[688] Christians are largely excluded from these festivals. They may not
participate in pagan dances, or join in the lewd songs, or attend
the initiation hut of a girl, and they are partly debarred from the
feasts of the pagans: certain of the Churches (notably the Church
[273] of Scotland and, for a time, the Moravians) forbid Christians to
drink beer at all.

And the Christian rituals, though some of them are 'festivals
[796] of the Church', are scarcely celebrated as such. There has been a
separation between ritual and recreation which has left a gap in
the Christian community. It is true that the Christian young men
[535] and girls sing and dance at funerals and marriages, but the elders,
[684] for the most part, look on with dubious eyes, saying that dancing
leads to adultery, and several of the dances introduced by

was not an individual one. True, a girl gave her formal consent in 177
the marriage ritual, but the pressure on her to accept the husband
selected for her by her kinsmen was almost irresistible. In the [581]
thirties Christian women who refused their husband's heir and [583]
lived alone, or married an unrelated man of their choice, were
regarded by their pagan sisters as very daring, and little girls in
pagan families took it as a matter of course that they should
replace their dead sisters; today the right of a widow to choose [587]
whom she will marry is generally accepted, and the custom of
replacing a dead woman by her sister has lapsed. 'Every girl
wants her own husband nowadays', the old women say. Thus
lineage obligations give way to individual freedom of choice in
marriage. At the same time the rituals which emphasized the
lineage are dropped or modified. The fearful fecundity of a double [845]
birth no longer appals men and the twin ritual which used to
bring together all the living members of a lineage of three generations
is not celebrated at all. At a puberty ritual a pagan girl may
be given the *ikipiki* medicine, the symbol of 'the blood of the [881]
lineage' by her mother, but there is no seclusion and elaborate
feasting, no sacrifice of the bull of puberty that her father's shades
may 'move aside a little' to make way for the shades of her
husband's lineage. Only at a funeral do kinsmen still gather and [764]
celebrate, for many still fear the shades, and at a funeral the heir
is installed and the importance of property and the inheritance of it
has not diminished one whit. As we have seen, the traditional
religion was formulated in terms of kinship; the gods were senior [776]
kinsmen; but today God, *Kyala*, is no ancestor; to pagans as well [775]
as to Christians he is separate and supreme. Men are still classified
by their lineages, and one of the topics of village questions is how
Prince Charles can be heir to the British throne when his father is [594]
not of the house of Windsor; but already in the economic field,
and increasingly in the religious, it is the family of parents and [613]
children which is now dominant, not the lineage.

Divorce is far more frequent than formerly, partly because
women claim a greater freedom of behaviour than before, as well [586]
as the right of choosing their own husbands, and are supported by the courts. As one village headman put it, 'Formerly a father beat his daughter with a stick if she ran home and sent her back to her husband who also beat her.' The women reject the old pattern of subservience which was expressed in crouching to greet a man, and addressing him in a very deferential fashion; the men observe, and

4. A visit to the chief's father's grave was paid in company with the chief and some of his *amafumu*. It was situated in a banana grove (*ilieputo*[illegible]) not very remote from the chief's hut. The grave of the present chief's father was on the ground-floor, about one hundred paces from its edge and was characterized by a small sized basalt block about half a metre in height[illegible] and about forty centimetres in breadth. An *indola*-plant was also standing on the grave about one metre from the basalt block. 765 [764]

On this occasion the chief also told me of the special cases for which sacrifices are offered in this grove. These are performed only in cases of very serious accidents, sickness or famine which may overcome the chieftainship. In such cases a black cow is slaughtered after sunset at the edge of the grove. In the presence of the chief some pieces of meat of the slaughtered beast, together with some bananas, are laid down at the grave. The chief adds a prayer to his ancestors at some distance from the grave, referring to the evil by which the chieftainship or some special village of it has been afflicted. He enumerates all the names of his ancestors and asks them for their help. 768 782

The remaining pieces of the meat and other bananas are left in the grove during the night. When the next day dawns, the *amafumu* return and some *abanyago* divide the meat and eat it together. On this occasion the chief orders the removal of all remains of ashes from the huts. The ashes are thrown down in such unclean places as where leprous persons had been buried. After this has been done, the chief in conjunction with an *unyago*[illegible] produces a new fire for the huts by twirling, and all other fires of the village, or villages, must be kindled anew from this "need-fire". [766] [372]

5. The reason for visiting an *undagusi* (diviner)[illegible] who dwelled in Ibungu an older age-set village[illegible] which seemed to the visitor to be a more ancient part of Katumba, was caused by the sickness of the chief's sister. In accordance with the custom of the Nyakyusa in bringing women back to their father's village if they are very sick, the 787 [164 884]

[illegible] Cf. Johnston, [illegible], pl. [illegible], p. [illegible]; Mackenzie, [illegible], burial place, p. [illegible]; [illegible], graves of the dead chiefs, p. [illegible]; Wilson, Introduction, p. [illegible], [illegible], sacred grove; [illegible], p. [illegible].

[illegible] Cf. Fülleborn, p. [illegible].

[illegible] Cf. n. [illegible], p. [illegible].

[illegible] Cf. Johnston, p. [illegible].

[illegible] I proposed to call the special form of villages found within the Nyakyusa society, which are erected on the age-set principle, „age-set villages" (African Studies, Vol. II, No. 1, p. 13—18 June 1943), a terminology that does not alter G. Wilson's statements on the "Age Villages" (Introduction, p. [illegible] ff). [566 621]